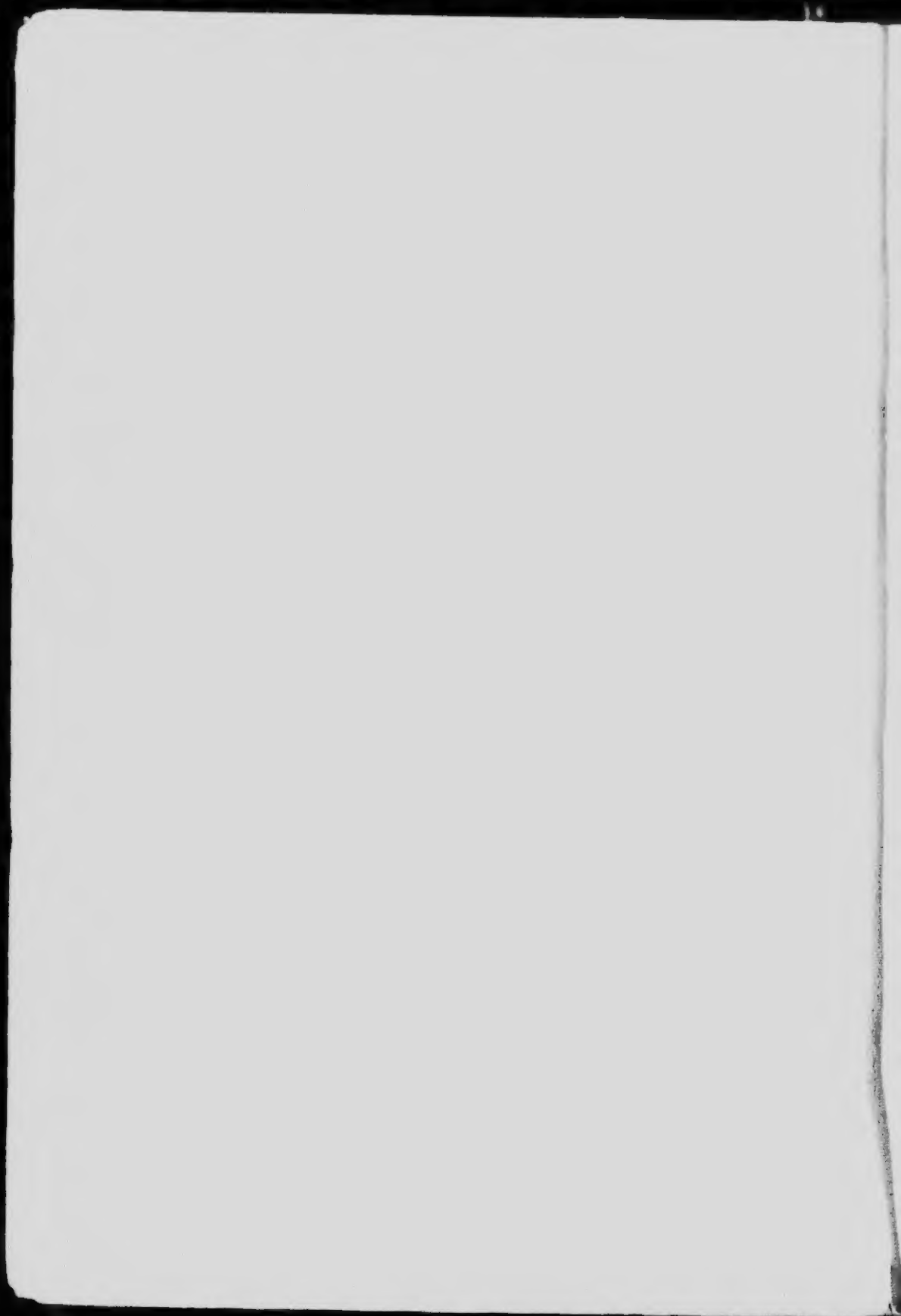
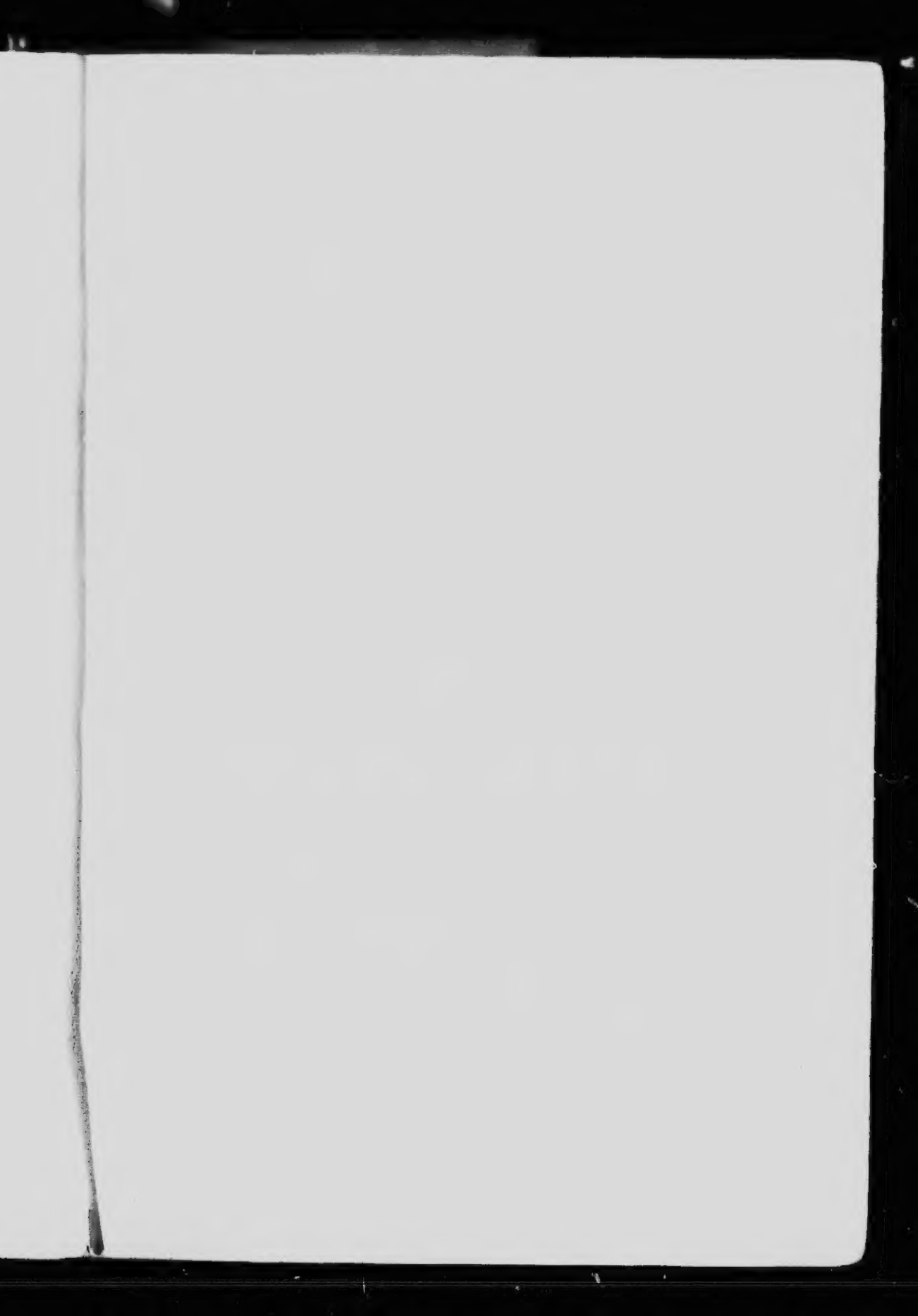
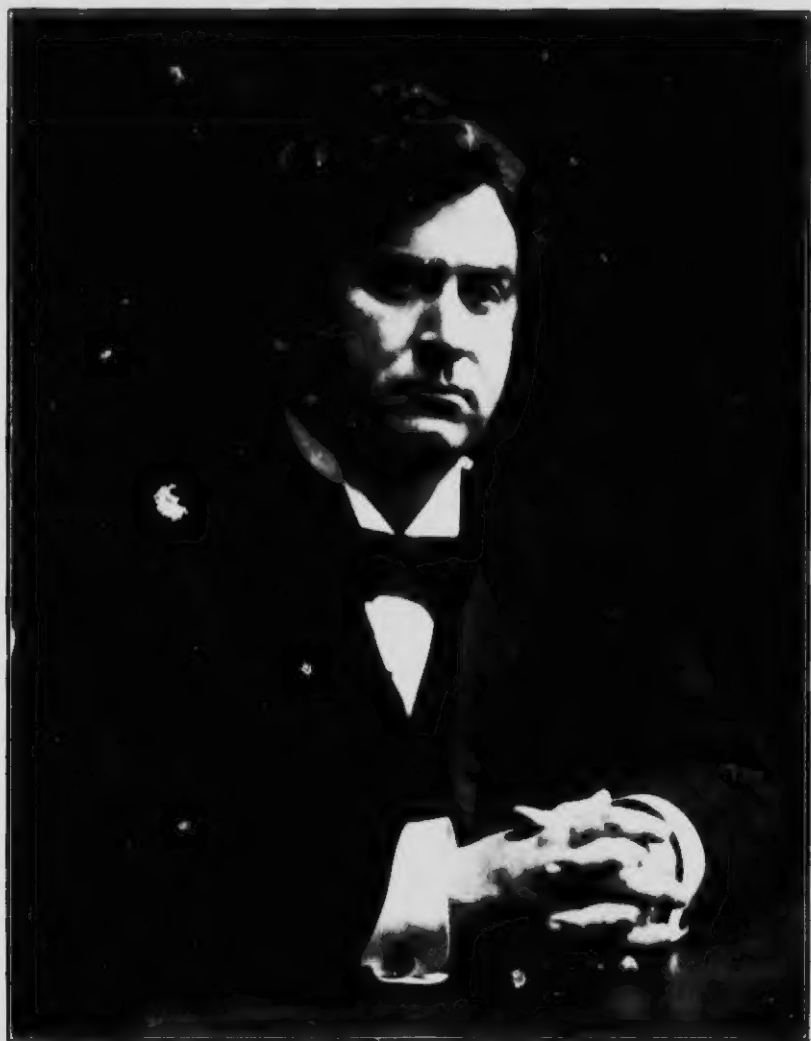




Jan 25 1880







Always Faithfully
Byron H. Stauffer.

OUR MOTHER
AND FATHER

OF THE

OF THE



Always Faithfully
Byron H. Stauffer.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS

AND OTHER TALKS TO YOUNG MEN

BY

BYRON H. STAUFFER

**Pastor Bond Street Congregational Church
Toronto**



**TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS
1910**

EJ 11671

573

1910

C. 2

**COPYRIGHT, CANADA, 1910
BY
WILLIAM BRIGGS**

880680

TO
The Young Fellows

In the galleries of Bond Street Church
to whom I addressed these talks:

—Some, after serving their apprenticeships for various life callings, have returned to the beautiful Canadian towns and cities from which they came, where, I trust, they will be leaders in all good enterprises; some have answered the alluring beckon of the West, and now, forsooth, are themselves beckoning to certain young women in the galleries to follow them; others still tarry with us, resolved to have citizenship in the noblest city of the New World;

TO ALL THESE I DEDICATE
THIS BOOK

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

The publisher is indebted to Mr. C. Klackner, Fine Art Publisher, 7 West 28th Street, New York, owner of the Copyright, for his kind permission to use the miniature reproduction of a portion of the large engraving of the famous painting "Breaking the Home Ties," by Thomas Hovenden, which appears on the cover of this volume.

CONTENTS

	PAGE.	
I. YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS	9	
II. WHEN A YOUNG MAN LEAVES HOME....	25	1
III. WHEN A YOUNG MAN ARRIVES IN TOWN. ^{Wait}	39	2
IV. THE YOUNG MAN'S DARKEST HOUR.....	55	3
V. WILL MY TALENTS BE DISCOVERED?....	67	
VI. FAILURE AT FIRST; SUCCESS AT LAST....	81	
VII. A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.....	91	4
VIII. WHEN A YOUNG MAN BUILDS A HOUSE..	113	5
IX. HUMAN NESTS STIRRED UP.....	125	
X. JOSEPH, THE DREAMER.....	143	
XI. JOSEPH, THE HERO.....	157	
XII. JOSEPH, THE VICTOR.....	171	
XIII. THE DEVIL'S PAWNSHOP.....	183	6
XIV. HOW TO KEEP A DIARY.....	195	
XV. "A COLT WANTED".....	207	
XVI. THE ONLY RACE WORTH RUNNING.....	217	7



I.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

"As one whom his mother comforteth."—Isa. 66 : 13.

Your Mother's Apron Strings.

I.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

THE phrase provokes a smile, for it has been used as a twit of sarcasm. It is flung at some brave youth who shakes his head when they ask him to take a walk into the by-paths that incline towards the precipice. "Come along! Come in and take something. No? Huh, you're still tied to your mother's apron strings, are you?" And the young man hangs his head as if half sorry that it is true.

Hold up your head, young fellow; it is a compliment they are unconsciously paying you. Never mind, those apron strings belong to the most beautiful raiment on earth. Your mother's apron deserves a place at the Toronto Exhibition. Some of our money kings could point to it and say: "That was what held me as a piece of scaffolding." Mother may have been poor, she may have been rich. She may have done all the work, or had the assistance of one, two or three maids, but the time you thought her handsome was when, in the early morning, you found her downstairs with her apron

■

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

donned, ready to work for you. That apron was her insignia of office, her toga as queen of home. It may have been a great piece of architecture, reaching from the chin to the feet, with ruffles and frills; may have been made by her own fingers or bought at a Ladies' Aid bazaar at famine prices. It may have been dainty and small, to match her quaint head-dress, just large enough to hold your tired head. But it was beautiful, whether made of cheapest calico or finest silk. It was grander than all the robes of King Solomon's palace, more luxurious than Cleopatra's choicest gown, richer far than the coronation robe of the Empress Josephine. Worth never made such a garment. Mrs. Howard Gould's endless array of dresses are soiled rags beside it. For that apron was a badge of your mother's goodness.

What a good woman your mother was! What good people mothers are, the world over! You didn't altogether realize it then. You were so used to mother's goodness, you never fully appreciated it until you had gone out into the world, and you are to be forgiven for not quite knowing your own mother's heart. Some folks live together a life-time without knowing each other's real virtues.

Chaplain McCabe, the great Methodist money-raiser, used to tell of a well-to-do old couple who entertained him over Sunday in a flourishing rural community in Ohio where he was raising money for frontier church work. On Monday morning the old farmer's wife

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

called him out into the kitchen to say, "Now, Chaplain, you know we gave you \$10 for your good cause yesterday, but I do feel that that isn't nearly all we ought to give. But my husband never was much of a giver. Now, I've saved \$50 from butter and eggs without his knowin', and I want you to take it. Here it is, but don't tell him, for he's so stingy, you know, though he has a good heart." The chaplain had hardly put the bills into his vest pocket when the old farmer himself put in an appearance, looking just a little glum. Dr. McCabe was fearful lest the conversation had been overheard, and his suspicions were seemingly confirmed by a rather embarrassing silence during breakfast, and an invitation, shortly afterwards, to step outside.

"Chaplain," whispered the old man, when they had reached the wood-shed, "I want to tell you something. I feel I ought do something more for these Nebraska churches. This \$60 is for a dug-out chapel, but for goodness' sake don't say a word about it to Betsy, for she's drefful closefisted."

Now, you see, they had lived with each other forty years, and yet had never seen the best room in each other's hearts. But time has given you a perspective view of your mother's graces, and you know her better to-day than you did when you were daily with her, though you have not heard her voice for years, even though oceans sweep between you and mother's cottage door. To-day it all comes back to you.

Mothers are the best policemen on earth. God keeps

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

the world orderly by giving people children to love and nourish and guard. The moment that heretofore care-free young maiden holds in her arms her first-born babe, she becomes the guardian of the morals of the street.

Mother knows, by instinct, what is harmful. She does not need to have a close acquaintance with the great world's sins. The mother hen need not know the hawk's nesting-place, nor fly as high as the sharp-clawed enemy of her brood, in order to warn her chicks when an ominous shadow flits across the barnyard. Neither need your mother be familiar with grill-room and gambling hall to advise you against questionable resorts and wicked companions.

I.

Those apron strings are durable. They wear a lifetime. There never will come a time when you can do without them. It is a mistake to try to shake them off, even after you leave home.

Is she still alive? Then let me congratulate you; a man is never old while his mother is in the flesh. The finest letter you will get this year of grace will come along about stubble time. It will begin with some comparatively trivial matters and then hurry along to where the plot begins: "We heard from John's folks the other day. They are all coming to see us over the holidays. So we are fattening two turkeys for Christmas dinner." Enough said! She need not even ask you to

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

come, in so many words. But she has made a trolling line of her apron string, tied the letter to it as a hook, baited the hook with a turkey, and is flinging it at you across a dozen counties or a half-dozen provinces. And at Christmas time, she'll haul it in, with her boy at the other end. You'll go down to the depot and stand in the long line of people buying holiday-rate tickets, and your heart will almost leap out of your body, for mother's apron strings are tugging away. They will tow you on the train, along the track, pull you off at the little country station, hurry the sleigh over the snow to the old homestead, draw you into mother's arms.

Oh, my boy, my boy, let her throw her apron string like a lasso from where she is, out in the country, to your boarding house in the great city. It is her right, it is your privilege. Let her advice be honored. Her counsel is for your good. Of all admirers, she is the one most interested in your welfare. She may not be strictly up-to-date, but she is your very best friend, young man.

Long after she is dead, those strings will still endure. They give you a sort of long-distance telephone connection with the House of Many Mansions. Crossing a Canadian lake one summer evening, we were singing old-fashioned songs as a sort of safety valve to the enthusiasm of vacation time. One chorus ran:

"Sweet Belle Mahone, sweet Belle Mahone,
Wait for me at Heaven's gate, sweet Belle Mahone."

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

A fine old gentleman with swarthy beard sang heartily. As we finished, the tears were streaming down his cheeks; he grasped my hand and leading me aside, said: "Pastor, I sang that song at home forty years ago. Mother liked it, and used to hum it at her work. One day, after I went west, I got a letter saying, 'Mother died last night. Her message to you was, 'Tell Ben I'll wait for him at Heaven's gate, like sweet Belle Mahone.'" And, pastor, I've tried, ever since, to live so that I could finally meet her there."

So to-day you have the memory of her goodness, as the fragrance of roses distilled in a vial long after the flowers are chilled by Jack Frost's breath. Is it not worth while? You may miss her physical presence even now, but you can never be robbed of the holy influences that her life has shed upon your way. And I care not how uncouth, how unlettered, your parents may have been, if they were faithful to the children over whom they were appointed guardians by the great Father above, your best heirloom is the memory of their life.

II.

Then, besides being durable, mother's apron strings are strong. "Tied to mother's apron strings" is a significant phrase, for no tether ever held a colt more securely.

One summer day I saw a little chubby baby boy literally tied to his mother's apron strings. It was in front of a little shack, and the young English housewife

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

had tied the wee fellow to the railing in front of the house, giving him about six feet of tether. There he was, with the apron string stretched tight, for he seemed bound to get away. He was vainly endeavoring to grasp a broken bottle just out of his reach. A little further on was a mud puddle that would have made a fine addition to his morning's play—and also to the family washing. And still further was a flight of hard street steps over which he might have fallen, if left untied. I thought, "There's the point; mother's apron strings keep us from the broken glass of improper appetite, from the mire of wallowing associations, and from the precipices of headlong wickedness."

Ah, there are holy tethers that bind a man to decency!

What keeps you as good as you are? Did you ever stop to think? There are some trespasses that from the point of desire would not be distasteful to you. Why is it that you have avoided them? Perhaps for the highest reason, you love the good! Or almost equally high is the thought that goodness is well pleasing to God. Perhaps you are not that far on; you simply remember that it pays to be good. Or you may say, "I am walking in the eye of God. God sees me and I must behave myself." Or lower still, yea, lowest of all reasons: you are afraid of police, jail and hell. That motive of itself never kept many people good very long.

But outside of the entire gamut of these reasons, there are girders that hold a man steady, like the girders that keep together the framework of a house.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

You are a beam in a social structure, and social girders bind you to goodness, and confirm you in virtuous habits.

There is the respect of a community, for instance. One of the advantages of a permanent residence is that the good opinion of his neighbors will hold many a man in check, who, if he stood entirely alone, might go into excesses. Then, there is the "burden of a family" as some very thoughtless folks call it. The *ballast* of a family would be far more expressive. To be kept steady by the burdens of mouths to feed and bodies to clothe is really a blessing to many of us.

But somebody's love is the strongest and best tether of all! O man, the love of a wife, the love of a mother, the love of a child, hold you in check. These are the tethers that bind a man to decency.

I know a man who, years ago, had been leading a dissipated life. He suddenly changed his habits, quit drinking, began to work hard, saved his money, went into business and has become comparatively wealthy. One day I met him on the street about lunch time and he took me into his auto, saying, "Parson, you'll break bread with me to-day." So we went sailing out to his house.

On the verandah was an invalid's chair, from which stretched two long, thin arms to greet that man. The poor hunchbacked girl had settled so low in the pillows that I almost thought it was an infant lying there, until those disproportioned arms were lifted up. But

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

what a face of love was hers! That big man let his neck be squeezed and his cheeks caressed, until his voice became soft as he whispered, "Papa's treasure!"

As we passed into the house, he said, "Brother Stauffer, that poor child has been the making of me. It is seven years ago now, and she was ten years old. I came home one evening, sullen from drink and discouraged with business cares. I noticed that she was depressed, and I urged her to tell me what was worrying her. She said, 'Well, papa dear, I've been praying for you all day. I've been asking God to change your heart and take away the taste for drink. And oh, dear papa, don't be angry, but I've been so afraid you would become a drunkard, and then what would happen to your poor crippled girl?' Then she cried, 'I can't walk, you know, and I can't work. Oh, dear, why did God make me crippled?' 'To have you love me and make me a good man,' I cried. And from that day on, I have never touched liquor. I started out to save my money in order that my motherless child should never come to want. I can see it all now. My crippled girl is here to keep me straight; I couldn't live without her; she's my guardian angel."

III.

They are long, those strings of mother's apron. You would almost think they were made of elastic. What is the longest line in the world? The C.P.R., you answer. It extends from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Vancouver, British Columbia. Wrong. The longest line in the world is mother's clothes-line; it stretches from pole to pole. The young fellow who inflicted that riddle on me might have guessed again, for on that clothes-line waved his mother's apron strings, stretching from the cradle to the grave, from childhood's merry days to the decrepitude of old age. They reach across continents, and are as cables beneath the seas. They stretch to the summit of the loftiest mountain and dangle across the mouth of the lowest hell.

"If I were hanged on the highest hill,
I know whose love would follow me still,
O, mother o' mine, O, mother o' mine.

"If I were drowned in the deepest sea,
I know whose tears would come down to me,
O, mother o' mine, O, mother o' mine.

"If I were damned of body and soul,
I know whose prayers would make me whole,
O, mother o' mine, O, mother o' mine."

At the end of those strings is sometimes tied a Bible with this written, in stiff handwriting on the fly-leaf: "From mother, to James." Somebody tells of an English boy who journeyed to far-off Australia. He grew careless, and never even took from his trunk the little Bible his mother had given him. Work being slack, he had to write home for money. His mother's letter, in answer, was full of news and counsel, but without

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

the remittance he so much needed. A postscript said: "Be sure to read your Bible, James." He wrote again, chided his parents' neglect and pleaded for immediate help. Another letter told of home incidents, the friendly enquiries of old neighbors and the love they all sent him. Then another postscript, reading: "See Psalms 119:18." He threw down the letter and burst into tears. His parents were deserting him. In his extremity he fell on his knees and prayed. It reminded him of his religious neglect, and he rose to reach for the Book. In curiosity he sought for the verse to which his mother had referred him. He read, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things—" He turned the page for the next word, and there, pinned to the leaf, was a twenty-pound bank-note!

Open it to-day, my friend, and in mother's Bible you will find the counsel that will in the end bring to you all the help you require.

IV.

Can mother's apron strings be broken? Yes, but you will have to deliberately cut them. Satan furnishes the shears for that awful task. But if you once sever them, I fear that nothing else will ever hold you to decency. 'Here is a law of character, says good old Austin Phelps, whereby the wickedness of a man is proportioned to the holy influences he has overcome. When the son of good parents completely breaks the tether of his goodly tutelage, he falls even lower than

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

the children of the religiously indifferent. Simon Legree was offered his last chance to come back to goodness when he received the letter telling of the death of the mother he had struck in his anger on leaving home. She forgave him freely, the message said, and had directed that a lock of her hair should be sent to him as a token of her love. Simon tore up the letter with an oath, and threw the white curl into the fire. From that day his heart grew harder and his life more depraved. He had cast from him the last life-line of maternal love.

Oh, my brother, your mother's apron strings dip down from Heaven to-night; grasp them now. Mother's love is an earnest of the love of mother's God. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." The Heavenly Father says it, and He is even more compassionate than any mother can be. He wants you to come home. You have often heard of mothers leaving the door unlocked and the light lit, hoping year after year that the prodigal would return. It is not difficult in the light of those evidences of unquenchable love, to believe that Heaven's gate will stand open, waiting for the last sin-stained, grief-laden, repentant son of grace to stagger in.

I have a brother living in a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri. The 'Frisco Railway skirts the back end of his five-acre lot. His wife's brother was brought to his home to die of a lingering disease. The sick man had with him his patient wife and an unmanageable boy of

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

thirteen. Scolding and whipping had little effect on the lad, and one day, after cutting up afresh, he ran away. The neighborhood was scoured in vain. The newspapers helped in the search; circulars describing the missing boy were mailed to the postmasters within a hundred miles, but all of no avail. Conjectures ran all the way from drowning to kidnapping. The poor mother could do little but hope and pray.

Finally, from far-off Indian Territory came a postal card reading:

"DEAR MA: I ran away with tramps, but am all alone now. I am willing to come home. If you won't scold and Uncle Stauff won't whip me, I'll come. I'll ride into St. Louis on a 'Frisco freight train, or walk. If you promise, hang out a white sheet from Uncle's back porch, and I'll see it.

"Your son,

"ARTHUR."

Think you that mother lost any time? Can't you guess right now that there were sheets enough out there on that porch next morning to start a Jarvis street boarding-house? And don't you suppose that those sheets looked radiantly beautiful to the penitent as he was hanging on to the brake of a freight car whirling into town that day? Why, those sheets were the tokens of his mother's apron strings. They said: "Come home, sonny boy!" They said: "No spanking to-day, my boy." They said: "Uncle's whip is broken,

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

laddie, and mother has cried so much, she's forgotten how to scold; come home, come home." And those sheets kept on flopping their welcome until the little prodigal was in his mother's arms.

So calls mother's God through the voice of mother's love.

II.

WHEN A YOUNG MAN LEAVES HOME.

"And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and went."—1 Sam. 17: 20.

II.

WHEN A YOUNG MAN LEAVES HOME.

He thought it was merely an errand; it proved to be his farewell to home. He could see nothing beyond the ten loaves and the ten cheeses he was carrying to his brothers on the fighting line. He did not know that he was laying down the shepherd's crook for the warrior's sword.

It is an instance of the accidental way of plunging into a career. Most of us are unable to frame any particular program when we are leaving the old home for life's battlefield. Details must be left to opportunity. A chosen few may be able to map out their destiny: "Four years at university, three at law school, two years abroad, and a practice in the metropolis all my life." The great majority must content themselves with an errand or two ahead. We have but little idea what lies beyond the carrying of the present bundle. We soon find ourselves in occupations of which we had never heard. And when we write back home and explain our daily tasks, the dear people are amazed to know that there is such a branch of industry, and perhaps just a little disappointed that we have strayed so far from the beaten paths of staple callings.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Now this blind-fold way of leaping into life does not necessarily imply a lack of high resolve. Certainly we should, as far as possible, have a fixed purpose and a lofty ideal. But the fact that the majority of middle-aged men are in occupations vastly different from those they had selected in the days when they were asked "What are you going to be when you get big?" shows how futile are our attempts to survey an air-line for a life stretch of rugged mountain country.

We may finally reach the position for which we were anointed by parental plans or by our own day-dreams, but the path by which we arrive at the goal is different by far from that which we thought we could see before us. Paul of Tarsus hoped to see Rome also, but he never dreamed that it would be as a poor shackled prisoner that he would be carried thither. Young Oliver Cromwell expected "to be of service in the ranks of God's hosts," but he thought his path lay in distant America. Therefore, when prevented by the king's men from taking ship, he imagined his career to be ruined. He did not know that the hand of destiny held him back that he might be Lord Protector of England. We cannot tell through what color will enter in the "divinity that shapes our ends." The highway to a throne may begin in a scarcely traveled mountain path, trodden by a barefoot boy carrying cheeses and loaves.

Be sure, young man, that the time for home-leaving has really come. Our laddie, David, did not hurry away from his native fields at the first sign of precocity.

WHEN A YOUNG MAN LEAVES HOME.

There had been a most thrilling episode in his early youth. He had been selected, Cinderella-like, above all his brothers by the venerable prophet who had come down to Bethlehem to anoint one of Jesse's sons as King of Israel. Whether he knew the full significance of Samuel's act we are not told, but the incident had undoubtedly awakened the genius within him. Yet he bided his time. He went back to the sheep!

Some of us who are in humbler spheres, who have never felt the stirring of genius, and will never mount thrones of great success, have at least had similar experiences. I recall a summer evening when with great suspense I took the *Toronto Globe* from my father's box in the village post office. The list of successful candidates for second-class teachers' certificates were to be published that day. Would my name appear in the list? The hopes and fears of a whole year concentrated in the paper my nervous fingers were now unfolding. It took me an age to find the place, and another age to locate the paragraph containing the Berlin High School contingent. Twice I vainly scanned the lines, and then I shouted, "Hooray!" The postmaster's wife came out from behind the wicket to see who it was that had gone mad. I showed her my name, which now seemed, to my dancing eyes, to be printed in display advertising type. She said, "Oh, is that all," and went back to her mail-sorting. But that didn't dampen my enthusiasm. I had old Billy out of the hotel shed in the twinkling of an eye, and gave

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

him whip and rein. To this day it seems to me that the faithful old horse must have known, for he never made those three miles home as fast before or afterwards. Who unhitched him that night I never have thought to ask. I only recollect bursting into the house yelling, "I passed! I passed!"

Of course I was the hero of the hour. Father broke the gravity of that last pain-racked year of his life with an old-time laugh. Mother opened her best jar of fruit for my supper—a prime testimonial of consideration usually reserved for the pastor's visits and other state occasions. The evening was spent in rejoicing over the triumph, and in planning for my term at the county model school. The zenith of my joy was reached when father said, "Well, good-night, schoolmaster," and I went to bed to dream of my prospects. But, alas, though I shut my eyes a "schoolmaster," I opened them as a sixteen-year-old farm lad again, for I was awakened by father's tattoo on the stovepipe and the familiar request to "Hop out now, son; chores need doing!"

Many a time since, that call, then rather mortifying, has helped me. Just after some little elevation, more spectacular, perhaps, than stable, the call to yesterday's common tasks has come to me in an imagined tapping on the stovepipe, and "Hop out now, son; chores need doing!"

David went back to the sheep. The drudgeries of home are wholesome, and are not to be avoided just

WHEN A YOUNG MAN LEAVES HOME.

because an examination is passed. When we have served the apprenticeship of early tasks, when we have killed the lion and the bear threatening the flocks of the homestead, when struggle has strengthened both arm and will, when we know how to get up in the morning and go to work with a will, when we have tasted the sweetness of coming home tired at night, when we feel instinctively that we are now ready for heavier tasks in larger spheres, then it will be time to leave home.

Again, one bit of juvenile honor should not turn the head of either parent or child. Young David had an accomplishment. With his harp he was a prodigy. His fame traveled to the court of King Saul. He played at Israel's Windsor Castle by royal command. His melodies drove away the "blues" so successfully that his majesty would gladly have attached him to his permanent staff. But soon we find the gifted lad at home again. Perhaps his father's good judgment and his mother's fears conspired to keep him away from the dizzy honors of court life. Wise parents! Sensible lad! Some folks having the advantage of the accumulated experiences of the intervening three thousand years do not appear to be as prudent as this ancient family of Bethlehem.

But when the time has come, go! It is possible to err on the side of excessive timidity. You may tarry with the sheep too long. Sad as it is to see youth thrust into the struggle of breadwinning or fame-getting before the time, it is infinitely more pathetic

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

to meet a middle-aged man unequipped for life's battle just because he has tarried at home long after he should have sallied forth to the fight. Such a man is often the victim of his father's easy circumstances. Because it does not happen to be necessary, from the financial view, that the son should begin to shift for himself, he leans on his father's strong arm too long. It is notoriously true that from this cause many great men's sons fail to give evidence of their sire's prowess. We all need to have our nests stirred up. We need to be shoved over the edge of the parental eyrie; otherwise we shall be simply good for nothing, unable to walk or fly.

Some parents fear to allow their children to leave them on account of the moral dangers in their path. They tremble to think of the evils which lurk where youthful feet must walk. So they keep their precious charges near them as long as ever they can. With jealous eye they stand sentinel over them. A good man told me that he had never allowed his twenty-year-old daughter to read a newspaper, fearing she might see what would pollute her soul. Now I submit that all this is like wrapping up healthy folks too warmly lest they contract the pneumonia. There is such a thing as encouraging colds by too much coddling. When a draught does pass over such people they succumb at once. You cannot always keep your children from contact with the world. And after you have put all the holy influences of a proper home life

WHEN A YOUNG MAN LEAVES HOME.

about them, with all the precept and example you can give them, it is the part of valor and faith to let them venture out to resist the evil and choose the good.

I once visited an old couple who lived on the abundant savings of energetic years of farm life. They had their two sons, twenty-one and twenty-five years old, remaining with them in their village home, because the parents had conceived the notion that it was unsafe to let them go abroad,—the saloon or the gambling house might get them. So they were kept under the parental roof, peeling the potatoes, washing the dishes, making the beds. Since then, the parents have died. The middle-aged sons exist as helpless hermits, leading spotless lives, it is true, but also empty of all conquest or helpfulness.

Going into the city does not mean, however, that you are rid of drudgery, young man. Your troubles are ahead of you. You are just arriving on the battlefield. So go modestly. "Let not him that girdeth on his harness, boast himself as he that putteth it off." You needn't hire a brass band to see you off. There will be many a struggle before the loud timbrel epoch of your career. You needn't write back to tell the village newspaper that you have "accepted a lucrative situation," when the fact is that the wage hardly pays board and clothes. Win your spurs first. The village band may welcome you back some day, but it will be merely an incident, and not of your planning.

William Jennings Bryan left his little home in

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Lincoln, Nebraska, for the Democratic National Convention of 1896 with a speech in his pocket. When he came back a week later he had traded the speech for a presidential nomination. Nobody had seen him off the week before; the whole town was at the depot to welcome him back. Somebody asked him, "Bill, did you go to Chicago expecting to land that nomination? Why didn't you tell us?" He answered, "I didn't think much of anything except to convince the convention that Free Silver was the thing." He had worked sixty days and nights on that speech. He had worked all his life on the elocutionary graces with which to deliver it. Having done that, the brass bands took care of themselves.

Do not say the goodbyes too exultingly. If, unlike David's, your departure is premeditated, you should take care that it be taken in the proper spirit. You owe something to father. Do not gloat over your prospective liberty. Neither let mother think that you are glad to untie yourself from her apron strings. Very likely as she was packing your clothes, she dampened them with her tears, so take your leave tenderly. In the parlor of my church there is a picture, entitled, "Breaking the Home Ties." A young fellow is leaving home. The father is carrying out the trunk and the bundles; grandma is sitting at the table, helplesslike, as if wondering what it all means; sister looks on half admiringly, half regretfully. But mother has her hands on the lad's broad shoulders as she looks earnestly into

WHEN A YOUNG MAN LEAVES HOME.

his eyes. One almost wants to wait to see the final embrace and hear the last good counsel.

Oh, young man leaving home! Be kind as you can this morning, for mother's heart will be heavy all day. Resolve to be true to your parents; write to them often. For now that you are gone from them, it is but a short journey to the day when you'll say even a more permanent farewell. One of these days, while you are busy in the great city, a messenger boy will accost you with: "Telegram for you, mister." Your nervous fingers tear open the seal, and you grow dizzy as you read: "Mother died last night; funeral Thursday." And this morning's scene will come back to you, and you will be so glad that you were thoughtful and gentle.

Resolve to keep up the standard of your pedigree, young man. I am not so sure that you can greatly improve it, for those Canadian farmer-folk from whom you spring are a royal generation, and I doubt whether you can add much to the quality of the blood, but you can maintain it, and hand down to your posterity an heirloom of integrity. You are in a relay race, my friend, in which your fathers ran before you, and they handed you a precious treasure, bidding you run well and deliver it to the next generation. If you stumble and fall, if you lag on the way if you tarry too long at a wayside inn, you may break the line of a good parentage, and incur the curse of Heaven.

Did you ever play "clothes-pins"? It is an exciting game. Choose sides, seat the opposing forces in two

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

rows of chairs, facing each other. Give the leaders at the ends of the lines seven clothes-pins each. Have them hold the pins firmly on the knee of the referee who is seated at the head of the double row. When the signal is given, the captains pass the handful of pins to the next in line and so on until the end of the row has been reached. The last man thumps them on the floor and sends them back in the same way, through all hands, until they once more reach the referee's knee. The leader that first holds up his seven pins, without one having missed passing through every hand, scores one in the game of ten points. You will soon notice that one or two careless players will spoil the efficiency of a side. They will drop the pins, bungling their very easy and simple task, so that the next in line will be unable to do his part well. It is an illustration of the maxim that no chain is stronger than its weakest link. So with the chain of pedigree. Woe unto him who breaks the line of a godly ancestry!

Resolve to go home with honor, and never with dishonor. You will grow better or worse in the city. And your growth either way will be rapid. It will be also unconcealable. When you go back home, you will not succeed in hiding your intervening life, young man. You cannot pretend to be modest when you have lost your modesty, young woman. Sen-sen won't mend a foul breath; talcum powder won't hide the marks of dissipation; the folks up at Bethlehem won't be so easily deceived. Your life in Toronto will show itself. Lead

WHEN A YOUNG MAN LEAVES HOME.

the right sort of life. You can make it, for you, Toronto the good, or Toronto the bad. So while the train is pulling out, after the last handkerchief waving from the depot platform has been answered, make this your steadfast resolve: "I will not know a wicked person."

See David trudging off, carrying his loaves and his cheeses. Sing, boy, sing while you may. A battle awaits you beyond yonder hills. Be strong and of good courage.

Good-bye, young man leaving some Ontario Bethlehem. Good-bye! Resolve to be a brave soldier, and thou shalt have victory grander than Napoleon crossing the great St. Bernard, grander than Sherman's march to the sea, grander than Wellington's triumph at Waterloo. Only be strong.



III.

WHEN A YOUNG MAN ARRIVES IN TOWN.

"And David came to the trench, as the host was going
forth to the fight."—1 Sam. 17: 20.

III.

WHEN A YOUNG MAN ARRIVES IN TOWN.

YOUNG DAVID of Palestine came to join the hosts on the battlefield of carnage. The Young Davids of Ontario come to our cities to join the hosts on the battlefields of business. The ambition to join the host transforms the boy of the farm into the man of the city. We left David trudging along the mountain path, an errand lad. Somewhere between the sheepfold and the giant's track, the boy became a man.

We should take advantage of this royal hour, and make it a time of self-transformation. So, having resolved regarding your attitude towards the loved ones you left behind you, it is wise now, since your face is turned towards the future, to make some decisions regarding your new career. Now is the time to "change your gait." There is no day so opportune for throwing off undesirable traits, and adopting new qualities. New environment makes the task easy. There are no former standards to hold you down; no old associates to charge you with "putting on airs." When a man is conscious of a raspy voice, a coarse manner, an abrupt address, he is often hindered in his efforts to overcome his faults by the fear that his friends will recognize but misunder-

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

stand the innovation. And his old self will plead for a continuance of favor by predicting that any departure from the ways of yesterday will only produce the laughter of ridicule. Though largely an illusion, that thought will be a handicap. It always takes a mighty effort to leap out of old ways. But the transition is made more easily when we are trekking into a new sphere, geographically and socially. So here, on the road to the city, is a good spot in life to make a new beginning.

Resolve to be neat. Cleanliness will eventually add to your income. Next to saying your prayers, blacking your boots and cleaning your teeth are essential morning exercises. Likewise a clothes brush and a hair brush are necessary tools in a young man's room. Also a good razor. And a towel for steaming your face before shaving. More towels for bathing purposes. In fact, if the choice of your boarding place lies between an elaborate menu and an abundance of towels, choose the towels. Many a man throws the balance between success and failure on the right side of the scales by casting in neatness. It doesn't cost much to be well groomed. But it means much to feel clean and tidy. On the other hand, a four days' growth on your chin, four days' dust on your shoes, a soiled collar chafing your neck, and a brown-lined, sweaty pair of cuffs rubbing your wrists, will make you feel whipped before the battle of the day is really begun. A shabby appearance engenders diffidence; tidiness develops courage.

WHEN A YOUNG MAN ARRIVES IN TOWN.

Resolve on high ideals. Live among them. To do it, associate with high-minded men. Somebody has advised that we should spend a part of each day with people who know more than we do. That should not be difficult for some of us. But it is important to catch the inspiration that comes from moral and industrial giants. Chum with winners. A neighbor told me that his son had been discouraged over the prospects concerning the approaching matriculation examinations. The father, after searching diligently for the cause of the lad's state of mind, at length discovered that it lay in the fact that he was associating with the laggard of his class. He had imbibed the languor of this listless fellow-student. A Saturday spent with two star pupils on an outing arranged by my neighbor, developed a new ambition which carried the young man through in triumph. Chum with winners, I say. Converse with the brainiest youths and cultivate the acquaintance of the most sensible maidens. Seek the society of noble men, and when you can, hear the highest artists in music and speech.

Next to mingling with great men in the flesh it is advantageous to commune with them in books and pictures. Keep a set of inspiring books of biography on your table, and hang a few pictures of famous men on the walls of your third-story, dollar-a-week hall room, and you will have the best of company every evening. Put Gladstone where you can see him every time you enter. It will be pretty hard to do a mean

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

thing with the grand old man looking down upon you. Place John B. Gough on the opposite wall, and remember that his last words spoken from a public platform were, "Young man, make your record clean." Abraham Lincoln and David Livingstone and Wendell Phillips would add interest to the group. Live among them, and act as if they were really scrutinizing your every movement.

The best advice about the selection of a boarding house runs parallel to Abraham Lincoln's word about choosing a wife. He said: "Pick out a good sensible woman and then pop the question to any of her daughters, it doesn't matter much which." So, in choosing your lodgings, find a motherly woman, with children of her own, who can sympathize and encourage and even reprove as only a parent can, and it really will not matter so much whether the bedstead is of brass or wood. A boarding house is a makeshift home, so the more homelike the place is, the better. To throw off all domestic influences is fatal. Because we are away from mother's table is no reason why we should fling aside the table manners mother taught us.

And let me say that what we learned from mother in the way of proprieties will usually be found ample for the most ambitious banquet or drawing room. There may be little passing fads of etiquette on which your mother may not have posted you, but they are not of sufficient importance to embarrass you during your first meal at the boarding house. It does not matter so very

WHEN A YOUNG MAN ARRIVES IN TOWN.

much whether you eat peas with fork or with spoon, or whether you tuck your napkin under your chin or into your vest. These are merely little changing details of etiquette. But good manners belong to the world. They run through the ages, with little variation. They are a codification of the laws of kindness. If good old King Alfred came back to earth to-morrow, and walked into the banquet hall of Windsor Castle, he might be a back number as to etiquette, but in manners he would be strictly up-to-date. Etiquette belongs to the hands and feet; manners belong to the soul. Etiquette comes from training; manners from the disposition. Etiquette may be learned in books for use in drawing-rooms; manners may be learned in the desert, for use anywhere. The man from the lumber camp may put his knife to his lips and be forgiven. But the man who breaks into the story that his neighbor across the table is telling with, "Huh, I heard that yarn years ago," is guilty of a social misdemeanor. The untrained man may not know what to do with his awkward hands and feet, but the ill-mannered man doesn't know how to discipline his hateful heart. As long as you love folks and aim to be kind, and show forth good will, the little items of politeness, with a little watchfulness here and there, will take care of themselves.

Yet there is a certain discipline about living in a boarding house. It is a necessary part of a young fellow's education. Between your father's house and the home which I hope you may soon call your own,

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

is a period during which it is salutary to live among strangers. The experience helps to break down selfishness; it enforces respect for the rights of others. Moreover it will soften prejudices. The youth just from the parental roof is apt to regard strangers with the suspicion of an eighteenth-century peasant. Such a state of mind tends to dry up those kindlier feelings that belong to the best development. It is well for the Protestant lad to sit next to a Roman Catholic, and for the Tory-bred boy to talk over matters with a young Grit. Such contact develops a wholesome respect for the opinions and feelings of others.

When David arrived at the front, he was at once told of a vacancy that was seeking a man. A situation, some would call it, though on account of the first three letters of the word, I do not altogether fancy its too frequent use. If you constantly say that you are looking for a "sit," as it is sometimes abbreviated, people may think that you want one where you *can* sit most of the time.

In Twentieth Century parlance, the advertisement that attracted the young errand lad's attention read:

"WANTED.—Man to kill giant. Permanent position and handsome salary to right party. Also life exemption from taxes. King's daughter given in wedlock into the bargain. Apply at Royal Tent."

Aye, that is fairly like the advertisement that greets our young Canadian when he arrives in town:

WHEN A YOUNG MAN ARRIVES IN TOWN.

"WANTED.—By the King Sauls of Toronto and Montreal, young men to kill giants."

Wanted, young men to overcome obstacles, to slay discouragements, to behead laziness. Wanted, young men to sell goods to merchants who say they do not want to buy, to make more towns a week than the other fellow, to unlock the store every morning at the stroke of the city hall clock; to stay a few minutes after hours if necessary, to do a little more than their exact duties demand, to account for every cent, even in the absence of a cash register, to make their employer's interests their own—all that is what the want ad. says. The ultimate rewards are not always announced, but they are nevertheless sure. To the young fellow who can do the business, the salary will come fast enough. And somewhere in the city is a princess to be won!

David says, "I'm your man."

Was that self-confidence or self-conceit? At first glance, it looks like conceit. A newly arrived youth imagining that he can do what no one in an army of veterans has thought himself able to accomplish! Is that not egotistic in the extreme? And yet it must be remembered that a new-comer has a certain advantage over those who have become discouraged by repeated failure. He at least has not witnessed their defeats. So he does not share their skepticism. His soul is not permeated with their hopelessness. So much in favor of the new arrival. And that is no small matter, as every employer knows. Here, for instance, is a terri-

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

tory in which half a dozen salesmen have signally failed. It has not been altogether their fault. There have been obstacles enough in the way. But the proprietor feels that eventually that route will be profitable. He tries a young fellow without much experience. If he has not known success, at any rate he has not known defeat. He has an untried enthusiasm at least. And he has his spurs to win. The chief does not tell him of the discouragements, of course. Good care is also taken that the new man does not interview his predecessors. That might be fatal in itself. He packs his samples and starts out. The first day he sends in a little order. Next morning's mail brings two big orders. Before Saturday the young fellow's achievements are the talk of the house. One reason for his success, to use the explanation given by such a hero, is that he was "just fool enough to expect to win."

The difference between conceit and confidence is altogether one of foundation. In the one case, expectation is based upon the shifting sands of pretence and vanity; in the other, upon the rock of past achievement. Not that the performances of the past need be as great as that which confronts us to-day. But they are the same in species. Yesterday's race may have been on a miniature track, but the speed and tenacity developed there will be utilized in the larger race of to-day. A Canadian railroad superintendent said all the ability necessary was "Will" ability, "Do" ability and "Stick" ability. The qualities for the

WHEN A YOUNG MAN ARRIVES IN TOWN.

larger arena of the city are the same as those that won the smaller battles at home. David had killed a lion and a bear. He had used his sling on the brutes of field and forest, would it be much harder to break the skull of a human brute? So when David said he could fill the situation, he had self-confidence and not self-conceit.

But now his enthusiasm receives a check. He is just beginning to impress the group he has gathered about him. They like his talk. It has the ring of patriotism. What, one Philistine to defy the hosts of Israel, the army of—

“Ha, is it you, Davy? What are you doing down here? Who is looking after the sheep meantime? Go back to your shepherd’s crook, young know-it-all.” It is his big brother, Eliab. He at least is not overawed by the lad’s courageous words. So the first note of discouragement comes from a member of his own family. It is not unusual. Your Eliab may be an older brother or an old neighbor, a fellow worker or a foreman—anybody who, content to mark time himself, is naturally a bit restive when he sees a younger brother assert his right to achieve. But from somewhere this first little shock of opposition will surely come. It will not be hard to face. David meets it with a discreet silence. If anybody calls you an upstart, hold your peace; he is very likely a downstay. Keep on, keep on, in spite of elder brothers, and you will be heard from. As for Eliab, this is the last time anybody hears of him.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

A successful advertising man had his motto printed on the reverse side of his advertising card. I hesitate to give it to you, for the words are not all found in the dictionary. But it is too apropos to omit because of a little slang:

" 'Tis grit makes the man,
The want of it the chump;
The men who win lay hold,
Hang on, and hump!"

The king sends for David. The news of a man's worth will filter through to headquarters in spite of foremen, rivals and cynical elder brothers.

The king listens to his offer to go and fight the Philistine, but exclaims, "Why, my poor laddie, we cannot let you go. You are but a stripling; he is a fighting man from his youth."

"But, your majesty, I know I can do it by little experiences I had while tending my father's sheep. I killed both a lion and a bear that were stealing lambs. I snatched the lamb from the lion's very jaws, and when he recovered from the force of the blow that the stone from my sling had given him, and sprang at me, I seized him by his beard and slew him. And I can slay this heathen."

Do you catch the drift of that argument, young man? It means that the confidence developed by overcoming that algebra problem will stand you in good stead when you wrestle with the equations of business life. When

WHEN A YOUNG MAN ARRIVES IN TOWN.

Daniel Webster was congratulated on winning his most famous case in New York City with but two hours' preparation, he replied: "But I prepared for this suit twenty years ago when I fought out the same principle in a justice of the peace court up in New Hampshire. Then only twenty shillings were at stake, but I knew that the same argument would win this million dollar case." The muscle that strangled the lions of youth can cope with the giants of later years.

King Saul meant well when he gave David the royal armor, but how the laddie must have looked in the big monarch's coat of mail! But, of course, if he is to fight a giant, he must have giant weapons and giant armor. He must go forward with the accoutrements of a soldier. Such are the reasonings of mediocre minds. Some men would have us all as much alike as so many ready-made suits. They would have our garments all cut by the same pattern. They would have a Moody finished off with the same mahogany polish as a Phillips Brooks. Why, we have enough sand-papered men already. There are plenty of men who are smoothed off beyond any individuality now. Why not let some unconventional folk do their work in their own way? Merit needs no fancy uniform. A Kipling can write his "Recessional" with an unvarnished lead-pencil on a snatch of brown paper. Neither a fountain pen nor a pad of Irish linen are strictly necessary.

Do not take another man's weapon; use your own.
Do not try to speak or sing or act like somebody else;

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

be yourself. Take the simple sling of your own accomplishments. Lord Curzon makes a timely plea for originality in his striking essay on "Frontiers." He notes that the tendency of the schools is to destroy individuality, while the simpler education of the frontiersman develops it.

There he goes, the brave laddie from Bethlehem town! "Whose son is he anyway?" asks King Saul half admiringly, half fearfully, as he sees him going forth to meet the giant. He has forgotten the precocious boy musician of last year. Nobody knows who he is and it really doesn't signify just then, unless the king is wanting to know where to send the dead body over which some Israelite mother might covet the sad privilege of weeping. For the contrast is terrible! See the big man and the stripling meeting each other! The big one opens his mouth to laugh. He laughs loud and long. "Am I a dog? Poor young innocent, it would be murder to kill you. Does your mother know you're out? Come, sonny, run away home, or I will furnish the birds a dinner of boy-meat."

The modest-looking lad waxes bold. "Mr. Giant, since thus you talk, coming in the strength of your sword, I will answer that I come in the strength of the Lord God of Hosts, and I will give, not only your body, but the carcasses of your whole army, to be food for the vultures."

It is enough to make a giant angry even with a boy. He rushes forward in a rage. O David, come back,

WHEN A YOUNG MAN ARRIVES IN TOWN.

come back! You may yet save yourself if you hurry. But David runs, not back, but toward his foe. He is swinging his sling! He jerks the string with all his strength! Lo, the giant falls! Lo, David is upon him, to wield, not Saul's but the Philistine's own sword! Lo, Goliath is slain; his head is severed from his shoulders! Lo, Philistia's armies fall back in confusion, and Israel's host puts them to utter rout!

And the laddie, with the giant's head in his grasp, stands before the king!

IV.

THE YOUNG MAN'S DARKEST HOUR.

"And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish, the king of Gath.

"And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?"—1 Sam. 21: 10, 11.

IV.

THE YOUNG MAN'S DARKEST HOUR.

A STUPENDOUS anti-climax this appears to be. Yesterday David slew a giant for his king; to-day, the king is trying to kill David. Yesterday, the hero received his monarch's sword for knightly service; to-day he must avoid the javelin hurled at his head by the envious Saul. Yesterday, he was welcomed like a conqueror; to-day he is hunted down like a wild beast. Curious reward, indeed, for the saving of a nation.

This is the young man's darkest hour. It might be called the reactionary period of life, during which must be learned the hard but wholesome lesson that the killing of one giant does not mean release from trial. It does spell ultimate success, if the same methods are pursued, but it also means new obstacles. Indeed, our initial triumph merely lands us into the vestibule of tremendous struggle and harassing opposition, through a door which none need expect to be counted worthy to enter until the first Goliath has been slain.

It is a usual error of youth to imagine that when the cheers of the admiring hosts ring in our ears, the reward is at hand. Did not the advertisement so imply? Did it not promise riches and honors to the

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

victor? So it did, and so, eventually, shall the pledge be fulfilled. But the advertisement didn't say all, didn't forecast the envy of the king, the murder lurking in the royal father-in-law's breast, the melting away of the host of admirers like snow in August.

No, the advertisement never does tell all.

"WANTED.—Men for the United States Army and Navy! Good pay. Bright prospects for promotion. Opportunity to see the world!"

That is how the bill-poster reads to the young Canadian crossing the international boundary at the Falls. The picture presents an army officer mounted on a nimble steed, and an admiral giving orders. It all looks very attractive indeed, but the young fellow who enlists soon discovers that the lithograph didn't tell the whole story. It didn't tell of the awful heat of the tropics, of the discomforts of camp life, of the undesirable companionships, of the filth of army posts. It didn't say that officers' commissions go almost exclusively to graduates of West Point or Annapolis. No, the advertisement didn't say all that.

"Goliath killed—David forever!" That is the way it sounds on graduation day. All troubles seem passed. The world will follow us, and remember the seal on our diploma.

But alas, men soon forget that we were bright at school. The trustee who praised us for "saying a piece" does not recall our name to-day. Being gold

THE YOUNG MAN'S DARKEST HOUR.

medalist does not necessarily advertise us forever. We cannot always wear the medal on our breast. The hero of one achievement need not expect a perpetual bed of roses as a reward. He is merely permitted to enter the next larger arena, that is all. Hobson cannot live on his one exploit of sinking the *Merrimac* in the neck of Santiago harbor. Binns does not receive a life pension because of his one heroic day on the *Republic*. Conductor Reynolds will not be released from duty on account of his valor at Spanish River. The first laurels just give the heroes a larger chance. ✓

It is a rude awakening, this discovery that courageous achievement brings trial. (1)

It comes as a shock also to find that men begrudge us the fruits of victory. But the sooner we learn the lesson, the more philosophically we will ignore the javelins of jealousy that are aimed against us. Through this period you must pass, young man, if you have shown merit at all. Oh, that you may survive it, and have no bitterness in your heart when the night of your eclipse is triumphantly ended.

Very likely too, you will be amazed to see how little your admirers are willing, or even able, to do for you. All Israel rejoiced over David's feat. The maidens of every village sang his praises. No more sheep-tending for you, my lad. Your name is made; your destiny is secure. But how different the popular attitude towards him now that he has become a fugitive with no place to lay his head! Since the royal disfavor has (2)

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

fallen upon him, the fickle crowd deserts him in the twinkling of an eye. And in adversity it is distressing to find how many erstwhile flattering tongues will begin to wag. "When my foot slippeth, they magnify themselves against me." Mendicants who received favors from your hand will magnify your weaknesses. They will carry bits of conversations and incidents from your friendly hearth and misconstrue them to feed a thousand carrion-greedy appetites. They will organize an inquest to gloat over every bone of family-skeleton history they can find. Ah, my friend, you are fortunate to be able to calmly observe these strange phenomena of human nature, recognize their universality and laugh at their powerlessness to do you permanent harm. Do not be dismayed in this, your darkest hour. The sun will shine again to-morrow. When you have shown that the prowess which killed Goliath still remains with you, your enemies will lick the dust, and the poor hypocrites who rejoiced over your temporary discomfiture will fawn over you and kiss your hand when you are crowned at last.

— The darkest hour is just before men recognize the merit which you know you possess. It takes time to impress an employer, a corporation, a city. Meanwhile, you may grow sceptical concerning the assertion that diligence and honesty and merit are always rewarded. It is a critical moment. If you yield to this feeling you will surely fail. If you say, "It is all a mistake; worth is not always observed;

THE YOUNG MAN'S DARKEST HOUR.

kissing goes by favor," you are lost. A young man said: "This notion that application and concentration of effort will increase salary is all moonshine. I've worked overtime without one word of thanks; and I've tried coming down fifteen minutes early, and no one ever noticed it." He had done that for eight weeks, and was disheartened because the manager did not call him in to say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" Now that young man was playing with the experiment. He hadn't the patience to let promptness and assiduity become part of his very life. He hadn't worked at the new resolution sufficiently to let his reputation be established. Give the world time to size you up!

During these dark days, which however are not nearly as dismal as they may appear, the young man is often prone to blame the wrong condition. Instead of waiting cheerfully by working hard all the while, he may wait idly for fortune to come his way, meanwhile seizing on some excuse for his failure. "Jealousy holds me down." It may for to-day, but it cannot hold you down long. So dismiss the thought. Believe instead, that if you cannot finally overcome even jealousy, something else must be the matter. I know a young preacher approaching the thirty-year line without a wife. He has not received the grade of churches to which he feels himself entitled, largely because of a chronic inability to get busy. Upon a fresh disappointment he said to me, "It is

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

because I am not married; the men with families get the best places." It never occurred to him that the highest-salaried man in the conference was a bachelor too! I have also heard a middle-aged man say, "I might have made a greater success if I had remained single ten years longer. I got married ten years too early. My family has kept me down." He was mistaken. His family had kept him tethered, which for him was a capital thing. For he was naturally a wanderer, a restless creature with the illusion that in Winnipeg or San Francisco or Medicine Hat or any other place a thousand miles away, fortunes could be picked up in the streets. He had mistaken the cause of his being "kept down." Besides, he was doing about as well as any man with his lack of initiative might expect.

While going through your dark days, do not wish yourself back to childhood again. There is a line in David's "Lament over Absalom," as set to famous music, that makes the old king yearn to be a shepherd lad again. Perhaps he did so wish, but it is not easy to attribute such a longing to his rugged character. Do not desire to back out of your struggles. You never would be satisfied if you could and did go home again. Go forward! And spiritually get into the attitude of the prayer which old-fashioned critics still attribute to David when he fled from Saul in the cave: "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy

THE YOUNG MAN'S DARKEST HOUR.

wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."

David was a gentleman in all his troubles. He cherished a little circle of true friends. One of them was the vindictive king's own son. He didn't blame the whole family for the actions of one. He had discernment. He was magnanimous. He tasted the sweetness of the friendship of adversity. What is grander in David's life than his lament over Jonathan's death, at the very hour of his own triumph? And do you recollect how, long afterwards, when the cripple Mephibosheth was brought to him, he honored him, restored his father's lands to him and gave him a seat at the royal table, just because he was the son of his old friend?

This spirit of a gentleman reached every nook and corner of David's career. While a political refugee in a foreign land, he so impressed the Philistines with his integrity, that King Achish gave him this certificate of character:

"Thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host has been good in my sight, for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day." That was worth framing and hanging up in the palace. Even in the camp of Philistia, he was true! Honesty, sincerity and politeness are qualities which identify the true man everywhere. Royal old Bishop Andrews, to whom good manners were so natural

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

that his last word was a gasp of thanks for a sip of water, was complimented upon this trait by an admirer. The Bishop modestly replied that the necessity for being polite was strikingly brought to his attention in early manhood. He was walking through an unfrequented neighborhood one day, and towards sundown lost his way. As he plodded on, tired and hungry, he met a farm hand. "Say, George," he shouted, in about the same manner that some folks use towards a colored waiter, "which is the way to Allentown?" The farm hand looked at him with a frown, and asked, "How did you know that my name was George?" "Oh, I guessed it." "Well, then," retorted the stranger, "go 'long and guess your way to Allentown." "That little lesson," said Bishop Andrews, "taught me to be respectful to everybody, great or humble."

David's nobility in adversity, and his magnanimous conduct towards his enemy, impress us with the fact that the instincts of a gentleman, or of a saint, are not blunted by hardship. No matter where you may wander, nor how hard-up may be your condition, your true self will manifest itself, and your conduct can earn you a good word even from some heathen Achish.

Just when the sky is blackest, the sunshine may be upon its way. At Ziklag, when the fugitive was apparently a man without a country, owned by neither Israel nor Philistia, the news of the death of his enemy reached him, and it was but a short cut then to the cry, "David is King!"

THE YOUNG MAN'S DARKEST HOUR.

"But if that word should never reach me——," you plead. Let me shout it in your ear, THERE IS NO "IF"! And yet, should you die in Ziklag, play the man even in your dying!

"Yea, though thou lie upon the dust,
When they who helped thee flee in fear,
Die full of hope and manly trust,
Like they who fell in battle here.
Another hand thy sword shall wield,
Another arm the standard wave,
Till from the trumpet's mouth is pealed
The blast of triumph o'er thy grave."

V.

WILL MY TALENTS BE DISCOVERED?

"And when the words were heard which David spake,
they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him."—
1 Sam. 17: 31.

V.

WILL MY TALENTS BE DISCOVERED?

BUT what if no one had told the king? What if the men who heard David had neglected to go to the royal camp to say: "There is a young fellow out there who at any rate has great faith in himself; perhaps it would be worth while to send for him." And what if the king had answered, "Oh well, there are many such young dreamers!"

Would we then have had no David? Or would his merits merely have found another path to recognition? In other words, is true worth irresistible, like a river, or is it accidentally discovered, like a pearl of the sea? Suppose the king of Spain had refused Columbus an audience? That seemed to be about his last chance. He had peddled his ideas in about all the courts of Europe. Suppose he had been rejected in Madrid also. But you say at once: "Keep Columbus down? The thing is inconceivable. His will was indomitable. Like the ancient hero, he would have found a way or made it." Humanity's faith in the unconquerable courage of the Italian discoverer is expressed in Joaquin Miller's sea poem, "Columbus":

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Behind him lay the gray Azores,
Behind the gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores,
Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said, "Now must we pray,
For lo! the very stars are gone.
Brave Admiral, speak; what shall I say?"
"Why, say, 'Sail on! sail on! sail on!'"

"My men grow mutinous day by day;
My men grow ghastly, wan, and weak,"
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
Of salt-wave washed his swarthy cheek.
"What shall I say, brave Admiral, say,
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?"
"Why, you shall say at break of day,
'Sail on! sail on! sail on! sail on!'"

They sailed and sailed as winds might blow,
Until at last the blanched mate said:
"Why, now not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.
These very winds forget their way,
For God from these dread seas is gone.
Now speak, brave Admiral, speak and say."
He said, "Sail on! sail on! sail on!"

They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:
"This mad sea shows its teeth to-night.
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,
With lifted teeth as if to bite!

WILL MY TALENTS BE DISCOVERED?

Brave Admiral, say but one good word;
What shall we do when hope is gone?
The word leaped like a leaping sword.
"Sail on! sail on! sail on! sail on!"

Then, pale and worn, he kept his deck,
And peered through darkness: ah! that night
Of all dark nights. And then a speck—
A light! a light! a light! a light!
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!
It grew to be time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world: he gave that world
Its grandest lesson: "On, sail on!"

One thing is certain, we must first possess merit before it can be discovered. Otherwise our speculations regarding the question asked by the title of this sermon will be a waste of precious time. The important thing is to have some one talent worth reporting to the king. So do not be too impatient, my dear young man, to have somebody scurry off to the royal tent to recommend you. Give the writer of your testimonial something definite to say about your capabilities. In what do you excel? Ralph Waldo Emerson said: "The man who can write a better book, preach a better sermon, make a better mousetrap, though he make his dwelling in the woods, will some time have the whole world make a beaten path to his door."

Is that strictly true? There is a widespread suspicion that something will depend on how Emerson's man in

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

the woods pushes the mousetrap into the market. Let us be frank in this matter. What part does the quality which quaint old Francis Bacon called "boldness," and which modern colloquialism calls "nerve" play in success? Some would advise to let merit absolutely take care of itself. That has been the view of the professional man. I use the past tense because in recent years the lawyer and the physician have felt the necessity of yielding something of their ethical code to the spirit of commercialism. At the other extreme are those who say that the secret of getting on in the world is entirely a modern audacity that reflects somewhat upon modesty. That is often the apologetic wail of the man who himself has failed. The sentiment is well expressed in a poem from the pen of S. E. Kiser, who by the way is a success and not a failure. I quote it in spite of my utter disagreement with its cynicism, just because I am thereby furnished with an opportunity for correcting a current misapprehension:

Cheek and Merit started forth, one day, to travel side by side;

Said Cheek: "Suppose that we agree our gains to equally divide."

"No," answered Merit with disdain, "your proposition is unfair."

"Oh, very well," said Cheek, "come on, and don't imagine that I care."

WILL MY TALENTS BE DISCOVERED?

There was a city far ahead, a city that they meant to reach.
They journeyed onward for a while, and hope was in the
breast of each;

A man who drove a prancing pair o'ertook them trudging
side by side;

Cheek spoke a pleasant word or two, and smilingly got in
to ride.

When Merit reached the town at last, his head was bent,
his feet were sore,

And no one noticed where he passed or asked about the
ills he bore;

He heard a tumult in the street, the people cheered, and
turning then,

He saw Cheek proudly riding by, the city's leading citizen.

Cleverly written, but not truly written. The facts
of the case are that after Merit had arrived in town
and rested his feet, he started to work, saved his money,
gathered a competency. One day, coming out of the
bank, he was accosted by a bleary-eyed fellow who un-
blushingly asked him for a dollar. The raspy tone
seemed familiar. Merit looked the second time and
saw the man was Cheek!

But the very names of the fellow-travelers are mis-
leading. It is not necessary to put them into contrast.
Suppose that Cheek and Merit were united in one
personality. Could not Mr. Cheek Merit ask for a ride,
and smile while taking his seat? And could he not

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

use both qualities in becoming the city's leading citizen? It is possible to mistake legitimate audacity for "cheek," and also to erroneously associate merit with languor.

Merit must be winged with self-assertion. It is self-conscious. It searches, not for position, but for opportunity. All the Davids ask for is a chance. But they must ask. Sometimes their spoken words make the request; more frequently their actions plead for them. But it is not a crime to beard the employer in his den and ask for the vacancy. The proprietor of a large jobbing house told me how he discovered his best salesman. "He was working in the stock-room for \$11 a week. He came to my office one day and said he would like to try his hand at selling to small dealers after hours. The manager of our city trade had already declined the proposition, maintaining quite rightly that we weren't looking for that class of orders. But the request was so unique, and the young fellow's manner so earnest, that I overruled the objection and had a line of samples and prices prepared for him. He went among the little stores of the foreign districts and of the suburbs, and came back with his hands full of orders, some of them so small that they were hardly worth the trouble of filling them. In a month his commissions amounted to more than his regular wages. The next vacancy on the road was given him. Now he draws \$5,000 a year and expenses."

The proprietor made one mistake in telling the story.

WILL MY TALENTS BE DISCOVERED?

He didn't "discover" the salesmar. That man discovered himself!

But quite often, genuine worth hangs out its advertisement in an exploit that speaks louder than any verbal request for advancement. An old magazine gives a splendid instance:

John Doe was the good-enough name for a sewing-machine agent who made such a poor showing in the small town where he was located that he was ordered to close up the store and deliver all the machines at a neighboring large city. The goods were to be hauled by wagon, and, as there were two loads, John arranged for one load to be driven by his younger brother, Robert, a budding stenographer who spent his unoccupied hours about the store. They started off one morning for their all-day drive, John leading the way. As Robert trailed behind, it came to him that it was a sin to haul all those good sewing machines past so many prosperous farms where some sewing machines were doubtless needed. Choosing a moment when John was out of sight, around a turn in the road, Robert invaded a promising-looking house. He told with enthusiasm and conviction the story he had so often heard John tell in a perfunctory and futile way, and he won, leaving a sewing machine and taking away with him a contract and a first instalment on the purchase price. When, at the close of the day, John arrived at the city office he explained that Robert was on the way with the rest of the goods, and nobody

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

was worried at the delay. But when next morning came, with no Robert and no machines, there was wonderment which changed to anxiety as the day wore on. Late in the afternoon John was standing at the door, looking down the street for his missing brother. When he saw Robert in the distance he shouted the glad news to the manager, who came forward in time to receive the loiterer. The wagon was loaded with baskets of eggs and vegetables, barrels of apples, sacks of potatoes and crates of bewildered hens, while a bleating calf was towed at the end of a rope. Robert's pockets bulged with copper and silver coin, a roll of banknotes and a wad of contracts written on miscellaneous slips of paper. He had taken anything and everything he could get along the road, but brought in not a single sewing machine. There was a council of war and a reversal of orders. The two wagons went back next day loaded with sewing machines. This time Robert drove the first wagon and John trailed. The store was opened up again with John still there, as assistant to the new manager. Robert, when he told the story, was a district manager.

I think that story's chief value is in ridding our minds of the illusion that merit and 'nerve' need be opposing qualities. Quite to the contrary, they are usually found to be allies.

But will all talents be discovered and fittingly rewarded on earth, according to grade? No. That, with our imperfect observations and judgments, would

WILL MY TALENTS BE DISCOVERED?

be impossible. The principle of school-room tests, with exact percentages and consequent rankings, cannot be carried into after-life with minuteness.

We cannot hold a civil service examination to see precisely who is best fitted to be the premier of Canada. And it is not said that because a member of a cabinet is conscious of his superiority over his chief, he must perpetually sulk over the fact that he is not appreciated. Something must be conceded to the accidents of opportunity and availability.

As a general proposition, there is a perpetual process of testing, classifying and permanently grading the talents of men, but it is done in the rough, and not with mathematical accuracy. It is like grading wheat out at Fort William. The quality of the kernels as a class determine whether the car shall be classed 1, 2 or 3. Yet every kernel of the lowest grade is not absolutely poor. Some are perfect enough to adorn a bin of No. 1 Hard. But time would not permit picking them out and giving them the highest place. Besides if that were done, the grade from which they come would not be fit to use at all. They are the saving grace of their class. They bring up the average.

Merit often misses position, but not therefore recognition. Office has elements of accident and influence; quality, of certainty and independence. While we must concede that chance plays some part in our temporary ranking, we need not seek far for examples of the complete victory of true worth even over fortuitous

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

circumstances. True, a glance at the steps whereby a great man ascended the ladder appears to confirm the luck theory. A certain preacher, for instance, now holding the chief pulpit of his denomination, owes his present pre-eminence, it would seem, to the casual visit of a commercial traveler to the little church of which the clergyman was then pastor. Within a week a gentleman in another city met the traveling man to say: "We are looking for a preacher. You are on the road continually. Have you heard a good sermon lately?" Then the drummer sounded the praises of last Sunday's preacher so enthusiastically that his hearer decided to go five hundred miles with the other members of his committee, to hear that man, and they gave him a call to a church that is a sort of beacon light, attracting sermon-tasters from the four points of the compass. Within four years he received a call to his present pastorate.

Now how easy it is to say: "See there; luck brought out that man. Had the traveling man not been directed to that particular church by the hotel clerk, that ministerial pearl would still be occupying the dark unfathomed caves of obscurity." Wait a moment. The pearl must have been glowing, even in its cave, else the hotel clerk would not have given his guest the direction. There must have been a beaten path from the hotel to the little church, even as Emerson prophesied. It must have been bright that morning, or the stranger would not have made his report. And it

WILL MY TALENTS BE DISCOVERED?

must have shone with lustre once more when the committee made their dive. So it wasn't all luck after all. Besides there were other drummers and other pulpit committees in the land.

Take Robertson of Brighton as exemplifying the situation when the pearl divers make an error in judgment. Representatives from an influential London congregation journeyed to Brighton to hear him preach. Either they had a misconception of what constituted good preaching or the preacher was not at his best, for they returned to the metropolis with an adverse report. Robertson remained in his fairly small chapel until his death. But that did not hinder his fame. If committees rejected him, publishers did not, and his printed sermons have stood the test of half a century, and have gone through as many editions as a popular novel.

Will my talent be discovered? Yes. But the chief thing is to have talent, even if it is merely to know how to whirl a sling.



VI.

FAILURE AT FIRST; SUCCESS AT LAST.

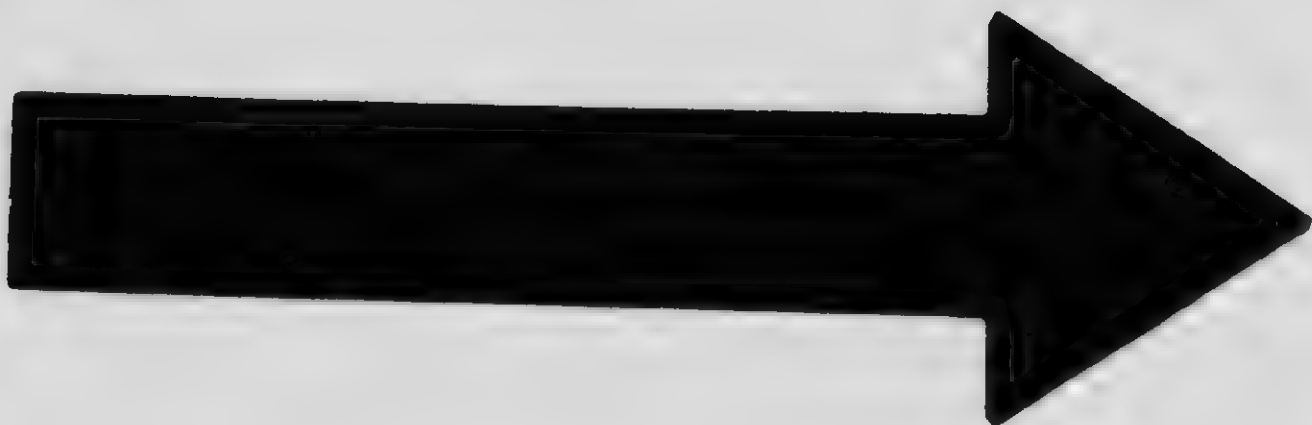
"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."—Ps. 118: 22, 23.

VI.

FAILURE AT FIRST; SUCCESS AT LAST.

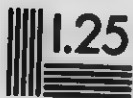
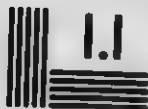
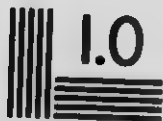
THE world's builders are always doing that. They throw aside the very best corner-stone, and put in a negative piece of insignificance instead. But while their backs are turned, the great Master-Builder comes and puts in the stone really designed for the place, and by that time the builders' places are taken by more proficient masons, and posterity exclaims: "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

That is the way history is written. That is why biography has such a charm. This text springs up at least four times in Scripture, and it has stared humanity in the face a thousand times since the last chapter of Revelation was written. You cannot keep it down, for it expresses a great truth of biography, a mighty fact in history and the very key-note of the gospel record. It makes the annals of the children of men read like a Cinderella fairy tale. How we love to read of King Alfred in hiding, scolded for letting cakes burn black, and coming out from his retreat to reconquer a kingdom. How thrilling to read of Romulus and Remus, cast into the Tiber, thrust upon the shore, suckled by a wolf,—to build the eternal city



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482-0300 - Phone
(716) 288-5989 - Fax

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

of Rome! That woman escaping through the storm, dressed like a spectre, leading a little boy, also in snow-white garb, is Matilda of Anjou. But the laddie, now fleeing from the kingdom with his queenly mother, will come back soon in royalty's pomp to be King Henry II. of England.

We like to read of the rejected becoming the accepted. We like to think of the young fellow in fancy waistcoat, shouted and stamped down when attempting to deliver his maiden speech in Parliament, crying out, "I'll sit down now, but the time will come when you must hear me!" That gives a certain piquancy to the career of the great Beaconsfield. And that is what gives the life of Christ such a charm. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." They didn't know that the Son of God was visiting them. But it is not long until we read: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name."

This rejecting of its great the world does in various ways. Sometimes the corner-stone is simply ignored. We are apt not to recognize greatness when we meet it. It must have shoulderstraps and brass buttons. It must have the badge of office. Somebody must introduce it to us. Æsop knew the truth of this text twenty-five hundred years ago when he told of the famous clown who imitated the squealing of a little pig so successfully that his audience demanded that he produce the pig from beneath his blouse. The clown

FAILURE AT FIRST; SUCCESS AT LAST.

unbuttoned, showed the jacket to be empty, and received an ovation. A countryman arose and announced that at the next performance he would make the imitation even more perfectly than the professional clown had done. The people gathered, and the popular favorite gave his imitation, which the people received with great acclaim. Then the countryman, making as though he had a pig hidden under his coat (which he really had) mounted the stage. He hid his mouth with his one hand and pinched the unseen pig with the other, until it gave a vigorous squeal. The audience impatiently declared the farmer greatly outdone, ordered him off, and called for the clown. The countryman walked to the edge of the stage, held up the little porker and showed the critics their awful blunder.

A young broker in Syracuse, N.Y., wrote a book of Yankee humor. He sent the manuscript to a New York publisher, who promptly returned it. A second and a third attempt ended similarly, and then the broker sickened with consumption. A friend took the story to nine more book-houses, but not one desired to purchase it ever so cheaply. But the thirteenth firm saw its merit, bought it and sent a cheque to Edward Noyes Westcott's address the week after his funeral. But the book, "David Harum," made its author famous, even after his death, for it was the story of the year, and they sold nearly a million copies! And when Ambassador Andrew D. White read the story, and found out who its author was, and discovered that he

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

had done business with him in Syracuse almost daily, he exclaimed: "I wish I had known him; I often heard that he was a humorist, but I never supposed he was really clever."

A poor girl came to New York from the West to secure a place on the stage. She was a good girl and believed in herself. She and her mother took a flat and paid the rent two months in advance with their last few dollars, hoping that by the time it was once more due, the daughter might have a permanent situation. But only cheap, questionable concert hall places were offered her. She refused all these, and tried to convince the managers that she had dramatic ability. Finally, after several had told her that her playing was not what the people wanted, she went to see Augustin Daly. That discernor of "stars" saw at once that she had merit. He gave her a difficult and leading part, and the haughty actresses who wondered why they were not assigned the place said: "How dangerous! Who is she, anyway?" And when she rendered her part so cleverly and emotionally that the crowded house fairly went wild and called for her with vociferous applause, even Mr. Daly supposed that another performer, an erstwhile star, was wanted, and the audience had to correct the misapprehension by rising as one man, and shouting, "Clara Morris! Clara Morris!"

Then, some are rejected by the world's poor judgment. I wonder how many men have started to

FAILURE AT FIRST; SUCCESS AT LAST.

invent a car-coupler. Well, a Buffalo man worked over that problem for years, and finally contrived a plan which he had patented. He showed it to some railroad magnates, but they thought it wouldn't do at all. As a last resort, he took it to Cornelius Vanderbilt. He liked it and tried it on some cars. Then he sent for the inventor, whose name was Charlie Gould, made a proposition, took him into a company, which they called the Gould Coupler Company, and they started to make the car-couplers for the whole world.

The great man is often so unique that the mediocre people who do the judging reject them because they are so different from the average run of mankind. That is why Joseph Parker, in his youth, was refused a license to preach by the little Wesleyan chapel in which he preached a few characteristic sermons, and that is why the good Scotch woman, who had been sitting under a pastor who talked through his nose, said when she heard Dr. Parker: "He canna' be a great preacher. He doesna' whinny at a'!"

But the corner-stone, Jesus Christ, was rejected by the world's antagonism. That which will finally be really great comes at first as an intrusion. The ignorant world doesn't like to have anything disturb its mechanical arrangements. Society does not like to be told: "Move forward, please," any more than do folks in a street car. Angry mobs meet reforms with clubs and stones. Fulton's steamboat and

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Stephenson's locomotive aroused the jeers of the world's ignorance. The very people who will be benefited by a reform are apt to join the raging mob against its promoters. Oh, foolish Northampton, to reject Jonathan Edwards! Oh, foolish Geneva, to drive out John Calvin! Oh, foolish Mecca, to refuse Mahomet! Oh, foolish Nazareth, to thrust out Jesus! Oh, foolish Jerusalem, to crucify the Lord! For He is to be the head of the corner at last! When? Soon, very soon. To-day? No. To-morrow? Yes, and a very long to-morrow, a to-morrow that will never end, for the building in which He is to be the cornerstone is the House not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

The rejected of yesterday is the accepted of to-day. Right around the corner yonder, on Bond Street, is an old house with a wee monument, in the form of a block of stone, built in the brick wall. The inscription reads, "Presented to William Lyon Mackenzie by his friends." Why did they need to give him a house? Because he was poor. And why was he poor? Because he was working for you and me, and we had not yet arrived on the scene when he needed his pay. What was he working at? Making Canada worth living in!

This man stood up! He was expelled from the legislative assembly for standing up. He was re-elected by his constituents, and forty sleigh-loads of them came down Yonge Street with him to see that he got his seat. Of "the processions that have moved

FAILURE AT FIRST; SUCCESS AT LAST.

down Toronto's chief thoroughfare, that train of sleighs was the greatest. Expelled twice, elected thrice; expelled thrice, elected four times; expelled four times, elected five times. Expelled again; elected Mayor of Toronto. That was the record of three years. Meanwhile no fiscal reports, no religious equality, no constitutional government, no attention paid to petitions. The yoke became grievous. Tyranny makes reformers. Long-continued oppression makes fanatics. Harper's Ferry was the natural outcome of Southern insolence; Navy Island was the normal fruitage of the Family Compact. That the Canadian rebellion in its narrower scope failed was likely providential. That it succeeded in a larger sense is a matter of history. The lonely little cannon at Niagara echoed to Windsor Castle, and the young Queen anxiously inquired about the welfare of her Canadian subjects. Insolent governors were recalled; their successors were given new instructions. Petitions were heeded. Constitutional government was granted. Murmurings gave way to contentment, and the doctrines of the rebels of 1837 are the doctrines of the loyalists of 1910. The rejected becomes the accepted.

" Ever the truth comes uppermost,
And ever justice is done.
For humanity sweeps onward;
Where to-day the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas,
With the silver in his hands.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

"Far in front the cross stands ready,
And the crackling fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday
In silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes
In history's golden urn."

VII.

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.

"And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

"Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."—Ruth 1: 16, 17.

VII.

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.

THE story of Ruth makes lovers listen, the world over. Longfellow's swain pays his betrothed the highest compliment when he says to her:

"Long was the good man's sermon;
But it seemed not so to me,
For he spoke of Ruth, the beautiful,
And then I thought of thee."

This Bible love-tale could be dramatized. It would make a play without a villain. We might divide it into four pretty scenes with a wedding for a climax.

I.

Scene the First. Four people trudge across the stage with heavy bundles on their backs. There are the husband and the wife, both careworn and poorly clad, and two stalwart though pinchfaced youths. But a gleam of hope is still in their eyes, for they have heard that beyond the bare glens about them there is a land that the awful famine has not visited. The man is Elimelech; the woman, his wife Naomi; the boys,

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Chilion and Mahlon. They are poor emigrants, staggering from a hard-times country to one where, at any rate, distance lends enchantment to the view. There is no bread in Israel, so they are moving to Moab.

An English evangelist of some reputation for fitting all Scripture into revival themes deals quite harshly with Elimelech and Naomi. He likens their journey to that of the Prodigal Son. In going into Moab, these people backslide. They show a rebellious spirit, a lack of faith and a spiritual decline. Now, I submit that this habit of perverting Scripture to fit the transient needs of our exhortations is both foolish and baneful. In this case it puts four brave people in a very false light, and deprives us of a fine example of ancient courage.

Emigrants are usually heroes; to wit, your forefathers and mine. "Wife, times are hard, men are out of work, Europe is overcrowded; let us try our fortunes in America." Bundles are shouldered, the tramp to the ship is commenced, the steerage passage is secured, the ocean is crossed, America is reached! Don't blush, but the couple I am talking about were your grandparents. They didn't possess very much of anything except the courage to cross the sea. But that was a deal more than some of their neighbors had. The neighbors timidly stayed in England, Scotland or Ireland; your grandparents came away. Now, after fifty or seventy-five years, you see the grandchildren of those neighbors of your forebears emerge from quarantine

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.

with their oilcloth satchels, and you turn up your nose at the sight of their anxious, hungry faces, and you mock their provincial twang, and thank God that you are a Canadian, and lament the fact that so many of these cheap Englishmen are coming over. Oh, that the kodak and the phonograph had been in use two generations ago. If you could see how your grandsire looked and how he was dressed, if you could hear him chatter his dialect the day after he arrived, you would—well, you would shake hands with those newly-arrived third cousins of yours and treat them a little more con'derately than you do. Do not get angry, please. ' not say that your grandfather didn't look so frail and debilitated and poor and shabby. You did not see the old gentleman as he looked then. But he had the courage to come across, and that was enough. Do not sneer at shacktown. The immigrant who buys a twenty-foot lot and builds a home, even if it is, at first, no larger than a freight car, has all the pluck necessary to "make good."

We cannot all stay in the cozy Bethlehem of our childhood. Some of us find ourselves uprooted by force of circumstances, and transplanted on strange shores. Ties which it took years to knit must be severed. But there are joys which we can take with us even to Moab. Home is home anyway. Unpack the trunks, hang up the few pictures, arrange the little shelf of books, put a mat on the floor, set up a bed, start a cheerful fire, get the tea kettle a-singing, lift the voice,

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

all hands, in the old-time song: "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

II.

Scene the Second. In the distance flows the lazy Jordan. Closer, in the foreground, is a highway leading to a ford. Beyond the river is Israel; here is Moab. On the highway stand three women. The first we know, even though she is bent with the burdens of the intervening ten years; she is Naomi, widow of Elimelech. The other two are dark-hued young women, Orpah and Ruth, the Moabitish wives that Mahlon and Chilion married in the foreign land. But poor Naomi's two sons have followed their father to the grave, so her daughters-in-law are widows too.

As the three are standing here, Naomi speaks. Scripture gives her words in such exquisite fashion, it would be vandalism to paraphrase the sentences:

"And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

"The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept."

Why does Naomi stand here at the parting of the ways and urge her daughters-in-law to go back to Moab? Of course, the English sermonizer referred to

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.

scores her unmercifully and declares her to be on a par with those who prevent sinners from seeing the error of their way. The author of this book of our Bible, however, has no word of condemnation either for the outgoing emigrants or for the returning Naomi. But why does she advise against a course that would, at least, be helpful to herself? To my thinking, it is altogether a racial question. She knows that the people of Israel do not take kindly to strangers. She is unwilling that the widows of her sons should suffer ostracism. It is better for them to return. For their sakes, she is willing to proceed to Bethlehem alone. She is a brave woman, even though all sermon-makers may not understand her.

The young women make weeping protest. "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people." But Naomi repeats and emphasizes her words. Then Orpah acquiesces. With tears she kisses her mother-in-law farewell. But Ruth persists in her resolution. Naomi cannot shake her. With those words which will never be surpassed as a pledge of fidelity, she plights her faith.

It is not necessary to scorn the vanishing Orpah in order to give Ruth her meed of praise. Orpah did what the great majority of us would do. Ask a hundred young women if they will volunteer as missionaries to Africa, and you may find but one to accept. Must the other ninety-nine therefore be traduced? No, they did not see fit to make a notable sacrifice, but they may,

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

nevertheless, have merit. They severally enter upon lives of usefulness, some as nurses, some as teachers, the majority as good wives and mothers. Quite naturally, we hear little more of those ninety-nine, but the hundredth one goes to Africa, becomes the spiritual mother of thousands of black children, and the whole Christian world reveres the memory of Agnes McAllister.

The Orpahs shut themselves out from the opportunity of deathless fame; they are just ordinary folks who follow the great law of average. They may even, in later years, show somewhat of a "reversion to type." They disappear among a million others who, like them, are lost on the horizon.

But Ruth is of the stuff that heroines are made of. She belongs to the race of Florence Nightingales, Clara Bartons, Grace Darlings. She pours out her whole vial of precious ointment upon the feet of the one she loves.

So this is the crossroad at which the Orpahs and the Ruths stand; not a choice between evil and good, but between the well-beaten highway of justifiable self-interest and the almost trackless path of extraordinary sacrifice to love and duty. And the first path leads to the great metropolis of forgotten careers; the second to the little company of Immortals.

But of the final destination of the path she has chosen Ruth knows nothing to-day. She has only one reason for taking up her bundle again to follow Naomi

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.

on the highway leading beyond the Jordan, and that is the reason of love.

III.

Scene the Third. Before a half-ruined cottage in the little hamlet of Bethlehem the tired travelers halt. The doors are no sooner opened and the cobwebs brushed aside, than the neighbors, with rustic curiosity, begin to gather to find out who is moving into Elimelech's house. They see an old woman, white-haired, wrinkled and bowed down. But there is something familiar about the quiet smile that plays around the corners of mouth and eye, and they say: "Why, Naomi, is this you?" "Yes, it is I, but Mara would be a more fitting name, for I have passed through bitter trials. I went away full, I have returned empty." Ah, we know not what ten years may bring forth. Some go to the Northwest and come back even from that land of promise, empty.

There is nothing in the house to eat. Something must be done to get bread. So the able-bodied Ruth says to the frail Naomi: "I will go into the field and glean." That bronze-skinned heathen girl was a Christian even though she lived a millenium before Christ. She had the spirit of the Master. Self-sacrificing concern for others is the badge of discipleship.

Walking through the corridors of a hospital late at night, I heard a child's voice in an occasional wail that told of physical suffering. "That little five-year-old

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

girl's limb was amputated at noon," explained the superintendent. A nurse, bending over the little sufferer, was so occupied in soothing her that she did not notice our approach. She seemed to be getting right down under that child's cross to bear it herself. She punctuated every cry with a groan. Hours had passed since she began her sacred task of quieting that poor little girl crying for mamma, and moaning, "It surts! it surts!" and still the young woman with the white headgear was humming away, with her cheek down close to the fevered face, and her hand patting the curly head. Angels never saw a more glorious sight. But she couldn't get her charge to sleep. The eyes were no sooner closed than a series of fitful sobs would be followed by another scream. "It surts! it surts!" Suddenly a bright idea reinforced the nurse's resources. She went and got a big dolly from the nursery, and held it towards the little girl, saying: "Dolly's foot hurts too, poor dolly; let us put dolly to sleep, dolly's foot hurts so badly." Nurse started a lullaby: "Go to sleep, my dolly dear." The child became interested, drew the doll up close to her, and joined in humming, "Go to sleep, my dolly dear." Then there were some broken-off sighs and some long, long breaths, and the voice of the nurse, now singing a solo, became lower and lower until she came softly away, for dearie was asleep beside her dolly. That nurse was a brick. She illustrated the keynote of the spirit of this age, concern for others. The secret of

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.

her successful stratagem was the precious principle that in ministering to others we forget our own heartaches.

Ah, Ruth, no wonder that name is as sweet as any good girl deserves to have. For over three thousand years that soft-spoken word has been echoing down even to us: "Let me go into the field and glean." Many a widowed mother has been sustained by the gleanings of some willing Ruth.

In an American city lives a widow whom I knew when she was the happy wife of a husband whose home was his chief joy. But he died just when his business affairs happened to be badly entangled, and little was left for the family. Things looked dark enough for that frail little woman with her grown daughter, her twelve-year-old boy and her two smaller children. The oldest girl, Ethel, put her arms around mother's neck and kissed her. While she was stroking the furrowed cheek and wiping away the tears, a new inspiration came to the young woman, and she said: "Mother, don't worry; I will get a position and work hard to keep you all." The mother smiled almost in pity at the girl's dream, for she had been brought up in comparative luxury, and had never been trained to do much of anything.

But she was as good as her word. She first secured work in a factory and learned stenography evenings. She became proficient and went into an office at \$6 a week. Then she got \$8, and \$10, and \$12, and one day when I called at the home, the little widow's eyes fairly danced with joy as she announced that Ethel had her

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

pay advanced to \$15. Holy hands are they which carry home that money to mother every Saturday evening. Beautiful fingers are those which glide over the keyboard earning that money, whether they be shapely or not.

Well, I am not surprised that a young fellow with a rich father found that they had a nice stenographer in the next office, and he began to call and see her occasionally, and it wasn't so strange that he had sense enough to take her out in his automobile and show her a fine suburban lot which his father had given him. And he breathed hard while he told her that if she'd consent to be his wife, he'd build a house on the lot the next spring. She went home and tiptoed into her mother's bedroom, and told the little body what the rich young man had said. And the little mother reached out her thin hands and cried, "Lift me up and kiss me, Ethel. I want to look at you, and thank God for your good fortune." Well, what do you suppose the outcome was? She wanted to say "Yes," for she loved him. But she thought of little brother and the little sisters, and above all, little mother. At last she saw the path of duty, clear as day. She said "No." She took half a day to cry over it, then laughed through her tears and went back to work. She is still working and carrying home money. I take off my hat to that girl, for she's a queen.

Gleaning was about the only work for a girl in that age. All she could do was to pick up the "rakings,"

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.

as we call the aftermath of the harvest. And the sum of her long day's picking would scarcely furnish one loaf of bread. The poor must have been very poor then. Our poor get the price of forty loaves of bread for their day's labor in the harvest field, and our farmers can hardly bribe them to come out into the country and take the work and the bread. Our washerwomen get twenty-five loaves of bread for their day's gleanings, and you must treat them very considerably or they will go and glean in the next washtub. Nowadays a girl need not go into the harvest field to work. A thousand avenues of usefulness are open to her. She can enter almost any calling and command adequate compensation. The only limit is her own choice and adaptation.

And the Ruths of to-day can glean in any field of industry with every moral security. They can maintain their self-respect. There is just a little hint given in our story that the problem of protecting women employees from insult was present even there in Bethlehem three thousand years ago. The proprietor of the barley field gave instructions that the new gleaner with the foreign speech should be treated with every consideration. It is hardly necessary in this age for any such orders as Boaz gave that day. The woman gleaner is generally respected, the law gives her every protection, and she is adequately equipped by self-discipline to take good care of herself.

Snobbish treatment of women workers is no longer

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

tolerated in the new world. At best it was but an importation from effete Europe. They in the Old World inherited it from the ancient pharisaical spirit that marveled when the Master talked with the woman at the well.

"When I was a boy, there was no doffing of hats among the middle classes except to ladies," said an old man, in commenting on the democratic tendencies of the age. I wondered why he saw such a great change in that, and ventured to remark that even now the custom of tipping the hat to men was hardly general. "Oh, I don't mean men," he explained; "I meant that nowadays they take off their hats to factory girls and all kinds of women, as well as to ladies." Why, certainly. How dense in me not to understand! "Lady" means a woman of rank, or at least of leisure. And what the dear old innocent wanted to say was that in his youth, hats were tipped to the nobility and titled gentry only. And while he rejoiced in the fact that the young apprentice may now greet his housemaid sweetheart with uplifted hat, he still held tenaciously to the mediæval definition of the word "lady." He would not call a stenographer a young lady, oh, no.

In some places the ghost of that old pagan notion still stalks. It belongs to the bully period of man's evolution. I once announced a sermon on "Christ and the Working-Woman," and said it was particularly for the ladies who are independent enough to earn their own living. A critic took me to task, claiming that

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.

I misused the word "ladies." I should say "women." But I submit, good friends, that we live in America, and this preacher now addressing you revels in the deft use of that word "lady" and applies it to every woman who is of the nobility of gentleness and love. More especially so since this preacher has female acquaintances and relatives of both high and humble station, some having a goodly supply of gold by the grace of "successful" husbands engaged in divers forms of work; others getting more modest sums with which to clothe themselves by dint of their own hard work at teaching, selling goods, writing, typewriting or scrubbing floors. And in this new world, where fortunes are gathered, post-haste, by handling rags or selling mining stock, and where the millionaire's wife can recall days, not so long passed either, when she was housewife, cook, washerwoman and nurse, all in one, it is difficult to distinguish between "ladies" and "women," save by the rustle of silks. Isn't it a sign of a shallow brain to refuse a woman the regard due her sex just because she works for a wage? I asked the steward of a large restaurant in a department store to see a Miss Collins, who worked under him. "Oh, there," he shouted, "tell Collins to come over here." "I wanted to see Miss Collins," I said, emphasizing the word "Miss," so that it ruffled the big boor, and made him respond, "We haven't time to waste on politeness here." But I made him take time to visit

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

his employer's office soon afterwards and listen to a short but effective lecture on the way to treat his help.

Are the Ruths of our great cities sufficiently guarded from moral dangers in the fields of their gleanings? We are sometimes alarmed by the assertion that in our big cities the strange young woman is unprotected. Not long ago the newspapers brought us the shocking news of a Canadian girl's suicide in New York City. In her last letter she said, "A girl dare not make friends in New York." That cry echoed across the continent as a wail of despair. At first glance it looks like an awful commentary on social conditions in America's metropolis. But is it true? An editorial says by way of contrast that "Miss Kingsley and Miss Bird, the missionaries, traveled among the wildest and most uncivilized tribes and were entirely unmolested." Now we can afford to be fair even to our large centres of population. Evil lurks there, true, but good must surely be present also. This particular young woman went to New York to go on the stage. That in itself sheds some light on the case. She had written for money to take her home, but before mailing the letter tried to take her life. So it would seem on the surface that her temporary financial embarrassment was the reason for her suicide. The newspaper already quoted says: "The pity is that there are hundreds of good women and good men in New York City who would hasten to help such a poor girl, but how shall they be desecrated?" Hundreds of good men and good women. Hundreds of thousands, the editor might well venture to say. And

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART

they can be located very easily through their pastors, the W.C.T.U., the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., the deaconesses, the convents, or the policeman on the corner. A well-brought-up girl will know how to make friends even in New York City or Chicago. Let her but seek the church of her choice and she will find friends enough. The young woman arriving in Toronto, or in New York, can pick her company. She can freely enter church circles where, if she will join the Sunday School or the Young People's, many homes will be open to her. From these she will soon be able to select a good boarding place with at least some of the advantages of home. Mind, I do not deny that there are still many dangers lurking in the path of young people on entering the city, but I insist that the Church and her allied agencies are doing much to make the conditions comparatively safe for those whose parents have done their duty in giving their offspring good precept and example.

On the other hand, we should do as Boaz did in making our young men realize that they are the protectors of all young women. We should instil into their minds the spirit of chivalry. As a companion-poem of that school-book selection, "Somebody's Mother," the poet should have written about "Somebody's Sister." The girl who waits on you in the restaurant, young man, is somebody's sister and entitled to the respect with which you want your own sister to be treated. Moreover, much that is said about the moral condi-

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

tious in large establishments where women are employed is not reliable. The great majority of these workers live with their parents and may be seen on Sundays in churches and Sabbath schools. To judge them all by the isolated cases of delinquency among them is manifestly unfair.

IV.

Scene the Fourth. A wedding! Who is the bride? Why, Ruth, the gleaner of the barley field! So the gleanings were only temporary. It very rarely is permanent. One of the perplexities of the department store manager is to fill the places of the Ruths who are getting married. Why, there are little subscription lists for the purchase of wedding presents in circulation nearly every week.

The last time we saw Ruth she was walking home from the harvest field in the twilight, oh, so tired, and sweet old Naomi met her at the cottage door to ask: "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?" To-day, richly clad, she walks up, with a quiet dignity, to say: "Let me introduce you to my husband, Mr. Boaz." Doesn't that sound natural? We all know of just such instances. I remember visiting at a home where a dear old woman ninety years old was lying with a broken hip. For three years her granddaughter waited on her, acting as nurse, housekeeper and cook for her widower father and her helpless grandmother. That girl was a gem. At the end of that three years' vigil she had

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.

lost her rosy cheeks, but gathered a certain queenly benignity. The death of her charge, followed by that of her father, left her all alone. I couldn't help wondering, as I bade her goodbye after her father's funeral: "Will this pearl ever be discovered?" Two years later, at the close of a lecture in my former church she greeted me, introducing a prosperous-looking young man who, I afterwards learned, belonged to an excellent family, and saying, "Shake hands with my husband."

Yes, there is a wedding in Bethlehem to-day. Ruth, the foreigner, the poor widow, the hardworking gleaner, is getting married. "And who is she marrying, I'd like to know?" "Why, Isaac Boaz, that rich landlord who lives in the mansion on the edge of the village." "What? Well, well, I didn't think that he'd marry a working girl." You didn't, eh? Well, why shouldn't he marry her? If nothing else, it will give you an opportunity of saying, by and by, when you see her riding by in her carriage: "Oh, she isn't so much; she was nothing better than a servant girl before Ike Boaz married her."

People like to gossip about poor girls who make a good catch. They forget that there is a reason. Boaz gives it in the first words he addressed to the timid girl: "It hath been fully shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore." Merit will out. Some sweet day will come the announcement from the mouth of the Recording Angel: "This girl was loyal to her parents; this boy kept his mother!" Meanwhile, if you see a young man of wealth pass over the maidens of his caste and select a bride from the humbler stations of life, be generous enough to say that he must have discovered excellence in her.

Boaz *was* a good catch! He was a good-hearted, big-souled man. That he was a generous-spirited employer is evident from his greeting to his men, "The Lord be with you," and their answer: "The Lord bless thee." He was liberal. When he saw the strange young woman among the gleaners, and found that she was supporting her mother-in-law, he told his men to "let some handfuls fall on purpose, and leave them for her."

When the wedding is consummated, the neighbors gather to offer congratulations. Their words are a credit to themselves as well as the bridegroom. I like to think that the people of the hamlet where many generations afterwards our Lord was born, were a noble-spirited race. Boaz gave a hint of that when he told Ruth that "all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman." They must have been saying kind things about the foreigner. They must have been sympathetic and appreciative. And now they approach the happy husband to say: "The

A YOUNG MAN'S SWEETHEART.

Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel, and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem."

And Naomi? Ah, the precious old body sits in the chimney corner, where all good grandmas sit. One day the neighbor women bring a tiny baby boy to her. Their words are so beautiful that they must be given verbatim:

"Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him."

"And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it."

And the baby? Well, the women of Bethlehem thought Obed would be a nice name for him. And Obed left the family estate to Jesse, his son, so it was likely on those very fields of great-grandfather Boaz that David tended the sheep of Jesse, his father. So the shepherd-king of Israel had Ruth in the lineage of his ancestry, as had also Jesus, Son of David.

What a thrilling story it is! It has something of the romantic tale of Pocahontas about it. When the dusky daughter of the Indian chief Powhatan married the Englishman, John Rolfe, King James I.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

shook his head and said (let us hope in merry jest), "He has probably committed treason in marrying an Indian princess, for he is not of royal or even noble blood." That union of Rolfe and Pocahontas was fruitful in giving Virginia its most famous family, the Randolphs, of which Chief Justice John Randolph was a worthy scion.

Young man, if you have been patient enough to follow me through this talk, you are entitled to write your sweetheart:

"Long was the preacher's sermon;
But it seemed not so to me,
For he spoke of Ruth, the beautiful,
And then I thought of thee."

VIII.

WHEN A YOUNG MAN BUILDS A HOUSE.

"When thou buldest a new house, then thou shalt make
a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon
thine house, if any man fall from thence."—Deut. 22: 8.

VIII.

WHEN A YOUNG MAN BUILDS A HOUSE.

A NEW house is being built! The man bought the lot three years ago, just after his marriage, and he has been making weekly visits to it ever since. He has been seen stepping it off, marking the boundaries of the prospective house, planting a tree, grading a lawn. His wife and he have been drawing plans and debating the size of parlor and dining-room. She has been insisting on having enough closets. Now the house is going up. It might be said that it is being built by saying "No." You might stamp "No" on every brick. Every dollar going into that home has meant a refusal. Did there arise a suggestion to indulge appetite, to buy luxuries, to go to high-priced amusements, to take expensive vacations? "No, we must save our money for the house."

Now the house is going up. The roof will be on by Saturday. The plasterers will soon be busy. The plumbers and the painters will soon do their work. Ah, there is a thrill in the phrase, "When thou buildest a new house."

There is a bit of sociology in it too. These Jews were just entering Canaan. This was a law for a new

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

nation. The first thing to do was to build homes. A temple and a palace would come in due time, but homes came first. Happy homes make great nations. If only France had had more kings like Henry IV.! He gave the kingdom prosperity by looking after the condition of the common people. Asked what was his greatest wish for France, he replied: "That every peasant might have a chicken in the pot every Sunday." Wise king! How unlike the hapless days just before the revolution, when Queen Marie Antoinette, on being told that the people were crying for bread, asked "If they have no bread, why don't they eat cake?"

Homes will make Canada great. I do not rejoice so much in the building of another great hostelry or another immense apartment house. Many married folks are in hotels who ought to be in homes. Hotels are poor places in which to bring up children. And not to want to have babes is a crime against God and against Canada. Divorces come out of hotels and apartment houses. But the snug little homes that are going up will make Toronto great. The sod houses of Alberta will make Canada great. I bade good-bye to two young giants who were going up to Saskatchewan with their widowed mother last month. A sod house, twelve by fourteen, with one door and two windows, is to be their home. All right. Hang up the motto, "God Bless Our Home." The wheat fields will soon be bringing them enough to build a

WHEN A YOUNG MAN BUILDS A HOUSE.

little palace. Meanwhile, that mud house is a frontier headquarters of civilization and Christian culture.

A new house ought to mean a new start. It is a time to take stock, a time to improve manners, to leave bad habits behind, and set up a new standard of conduct. "Wife, I promise never to come into this house staggering!" That was the vow of a man who had disgraced his family in the eyes of the community. They moved to another part of the city to start afresh. He has been as good as his word. "Husband, in our new home I will never be petulant and fretful." The wife, also, has been as good as her word. Their moving day has been a blessing.

"Then shalt thou make a battlement for thy roof." This Mosaic law is a wonder. It goes into the most minute details. It has the definiteness of a Twentieth-Century list of city by-laws. What to do when you find a bird's nest is important enough for two verses. They had to build a railing, a parapet, about the edges of their flat roofs. As they spent much time on top of their houses, the railing was important as a precaution against accident. Do you see that little gate at the entrance of yon verandah? That means that there is a little toddler in the home, just able to venture out on all fours. The gate is to fence him in. Somebody said, "Better a wall on the top of the precipice than an ambulance at the bottom."

Put up your railings, then, in the new home, for there is danger. Somebody may fall overboard. The

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

possibility is lessened by your precautions, and if the battlement is there, the blood of the injured will not be on your head.

1.

Build Reverence as a parapet for the north wall. I mean by that, respect for authority, submission to God, to parents, to country. Children have rights. Somewhere I saw a sermon on "Children's Rights." It went on to say that we have been talking enough about "Woman's Rights," "The rights of labor," "The rights of corporations," but no one has mentioned children's rights. It proceeded to say that children have a right to healthy birth, to early correction, to necessary punishment, to fresh air, to good books, to salutary surroundings. What a wise preacher was he who preached that sermon. Children have a right to be taught that God sees and protects and rewards. Teach them a prayer and a hymn of praise. Have them meditate upon God, and let the fact of a personal Providence be the basis of their religion.

Respect for parents goes hand-in-hand with reverence to the Heavenly Father. "What have I done to have such a rebellious son?" lamented a mother when her twelve-year-old lad ignored her commands and left the room, giving the door a slam as a parting challenge. Well, I could have told her what she had not done. She had not impressed Charlie, earlier in his childhood, that her will was law. When she said, "Now, Charlie,

WHEN A YOUNG MAN BUILDS A HOUSE.

stop that noise, please," and Charlie continued the irritation, she did not take decisive steps to impress upon the young lord that one telling was sufficient. Instead, she repeated and repeated her feeble plea, finally capitulating before his sovereign will. All this because she had made a foolish resolution never to chastise her children. Charlie knew of the resolution, and took advantage of it. Therefore, he did not honor his mother, and the keystone fell out of the arch of home authority and home happiness. Your will, parent, must be law! But your will must be good will. It must not be whimsical. When the child knows that your refusals are for his good, he will respect your authority.

How glorious it is when children honor their parents. I was called upon to go to a hospital and pray with a young man who was dying. He had fallen down an elevator shaft and had broken his back. He knew he was dying. "Say, parson, I'm a goner," he said, in his crude vocabulary, "an' you'll git the job of putting me under ground. Don't waste many words on me, but tell 'em about my mudder. She brought up us four boys. She went out washin' to git our grub. Say a good word for her." It turned out that he had been a hero, taking care of his mother and younger brothers. When she entered the room, the scene was one that made even the stout-hearted policeman, who had come in to enquire after the lad, break into tears. The lad was so tender, even in his dying gasps. "Dinnis," he

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

faltered, reaching out for his brother's hand, "I'll give ye me watch if ye'll take care of mudder. Is it a go?" Dennis promised, and the loyal son died in peace.

II.

Put up Honesty on the east side. Some folks think they have taught their children to be honest when they really haven't. They have simply told them not to steal. And stealing they define, by inference, to mean leaving cash drawers untouched. The conductor went through the street car to collect fares. He didn't notice the woman and her child who had just entered, and he didn't put out the box to receive the tickets she held in her hand. When he had disappeared, the woman quietly put back the fares into her hand-bag. The little girl snuggled up close to whisper: "Mother, you didn't have to pay, did you?" That was all. At least it was all that any of the passengers noticed. But the child emerged from the car with an unconscious dishonesty, probably for life, handed her by her dishonest mother. If in ten years that daughter should be arrested for shoplifting, her mother would probably lament over her ill-rewarded efforts to teach her children to be honest.

With honesty must go unselfishness. Better far to have your children err on the side of liberality than to allow them to be grasping and unreciprocating. From a verandah a young father and mother were

WHEN A YOUNG MAN BUILDS A HOUSE.

watching their little boy marching across the lawn in the glory of his first pair of trousers. He took an occasional nibble from a plate of sliced oranges which he had placed on a little table. The tiny maiden of two summers, living next door, came toddling over just as he was helping himself to another mouthful. Do you suppose he offered her a slice? On the contrary, he stood guard over his property, munching hard all the time. The parents looked on without the least thought of correcting his fault. Finally, when the little girl made a faint effort to help herself, he seized the plate and carried it to his mother, who held it while her young glutton stowed away the remaining pieces. Now, that boy will develop a selfishness which will be a terrible handicap to his whole career. How easy it would have been to induce him to give little Marjory a piece of his orange. And how soon he would discover that there is a holy pleasure in sharing his dainties with others.

III.

Put Sobriety on the south wall. "What, another temperance sermon, Mr. Stauffer! Don't you think you're playing on that string overtime?" I sometimes imagine, by the way that some men turn over, tired-like, in their pews, when this subject is mentioned, that such is their unspoken word to the preacher up in the pulpit. Yes, another temperance sermon! It is a necessity. With all our talk and our voting, it does not seem possible to get the fool to listen. While I

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

am writing this sermon, into my office comes a man to enlist the pastor's help. Help to do what? To get back his wife! Three such cases have I had this week. A parson's work is manifold. He must be lawyer, doctor, public letter-writer, policeman. Where is the man's wife? Gone back to her father's farm. What has arisen between them? A bottle of whiskey. The bottle of whiskey has knocked the beefsteak out of the home. The bottle of whiskey has bared the parlor of the piano. It has done more than that. It has, on occasion, smashed the chairs, hurled oaths across the room, broken a woman's heart. All this in two short years of married life. Too many temperance sermons? Let me preach another. It shall be short. It shall be to young women. Young woman, there is no use starting a home unless it is a sober home. Otherwise you will not have a home, but a hovel. Young woman, before you say "Yes," will you use your sense of smell? Find out what he drinks. You won't sober him by marrying him. You owe something to yourself, to your pedigree, to your unborn children. Don't marry him if he likes whiskey. Don't for the sake of your whole life, start by marrying a whiskey bottle with a young fellow tied to it. That is my temperance sermon.

IV.

Put Love on the west side, the sunset side. Get love in your own soul, man of the new home, and it will

WHEN A YOUNG MAN BUILDS A HOUSE.

beget love. Cultivate the soft tones. "Be gentle and keep your voice low." Be sympathetic, and don't scold. Teach the children to love something outside of their own selves. To love self eats out the soul. I bought a galvanic battery, one of those electric cure-alls that you imagine will do away with doctor and drug bills forever. Among the directions was the caution: "Never put the two handles of the battery together, for that makes a short circuit and consumes the power." That is what self-love does. When a man is consumed with selfishness he creates a short circuit. Your love must pass through something outside of yourself. Then it will come back to you a hundred-fold. To get the children to love a cat or a dog is a gain. To teach them to love men is all-important. To curb their criticisms of people, to put the best construction on the acts of others, to see the good in men and ignore the evil, to dwell on noble qualities and watch for them, all this is to give your children an inheritance far beyond and above estates of land and bank deposits.

Love is always responsive. It is always returned. If a man that is half-way decent, and not too soft, tells a woman, "I love you," and she has not already been told that same thing by some other good man, she will usually return it. And if you will let the neighbors know that you are a lover of folks, they will usually return your love with their love. "We love Him because He first loved us."

O mother, O father, the text gives us a fine assur-

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

ance. Put up the battlements, and no blood shall be upon your house. You have taken the precautions, and your old age will be free from regret. The children will have answered your prayers. And when they are all about you, in your heavenly home, there will be no need of parapets!

IX.

HUMAN NESTS STIRRED UP.

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him."—
Deut. 32 : 11, 12.

IX.

HUMAN NESTS STIRRED UP.

A SERMON FOR MOTHER AND FATHER.

MYTHOLOGY says that the swan lives to a great age. Just before death it sings a wonderful song, and dies. So Moses, living to the ripeness of a hundred and twenty years, sees his end approaching, and before he climbs to the mountain's summit to have God for his undertaker and the angels for his pallbearers he sings this, his swan song, which we may read now, three thousand years afterwards, in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy. The man who, on Horeb, had complained of his slow and clumsy tongue, becomes most eloquent on Nebo; so magnificently eloquent that this, his farewell address, deserves a place among the masterpieces of oratory.

His song is all about God. The old statesman has passed beyond the petty things of time and place, and sees only the eternal glories of the Infinite. Somebody writes interestingly about a night spent at Hawarden during the last years of Mr. Gladstone's life. When family prayers were announced, the aged host

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

himself sat down to the piano to lead the singing of a hymn. The visitor was curious to see what kind of hymn the great statesman would select. Soon the whole household was following the leader in singing,

"From all that dwell below the skies,
Let the Creator's praise arise;
Let the Redeemer's name be sung
Through every land, by every tongue."

So the theme of the aged statesman of Israel was God:

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak;
and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.
My doctrine shall drop as the rain,
my speech shall distil as the dew,
as the small rain upon the tender herb,
and as the showers upon the grass.
Because I will publish the name of the Lord:
ascribe ye greatness unto our God.
He is the Rock, His work is perfect,
for all His ways are judgment: a God of Truth
and without iniquity, just and right is He."

Then he speaks so gratefully of God's dealings with Israel, tells of God's providence all the way from the Nile to the Jordan, how God found Israel in a desert land and in the waste, howling wilderness, how He led him about, instructed him, kept him as the apple of His eye. And having mentioned the miracles, the

HUMAN NESTS STIRRED UP.

chastenings, the blessings, yea, even the reproofs, he cries :

“As an Eagle stirreth up her nest
fluttereth over her young,
Spreadeth abroad her wings,
taketh them,
beareth them on her wings,
So the Lord alone did lead
Israel.”

This is the picture ; God is a mighty eagle, guarding the nest, and His children are the brood. We can afford to stand before this picture with uncovered heads and grateful hearts.

The eagle is the king of birds, the emblem of royalty. He is the sovereign of the air. He soars higher than any of his feathered brothers, and scans the earth with piercing eye. He lives among the crags, and flies among the clouds.

Even the eagle mother's nest is regal. In the loneliness of the lordly pine or the highest cliff the eyrie is built, far from the haunts of beasts, and beyond the reach of the fowler's arrow. This castle is a yard square, with walls of sticks and branches, bound together with twining vines, and lathed with birchbark and balsam, and carpeted with hair and wool, and feathers and down, until it is as soft as velvet. There she lays her eggs, and hatches her young. There her

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

lord, never polygamous, like the Mormons, but always loyal to one wife, patrols the air, as the sentry of the nest. Thither is carried the spoil of sheepfolds, and there the eaglets are fed with the choicest of morsels. There, when the giant pines sway in the beating storms, she croons over the little ones and tucks them into their feather beds. There she waits until the soft down of her children's coats is changed into sprouting feathers.

Then one day she stirs up her nest. She becomes possessed of a wild enthusiasm; she cries out with fiendish screams, as if imitating the shrieking of the wind, to arouse their ambition to soar. The eaglets feel her talons as she pushes them towards the wall of the nest. Look! she flings one over the edge and it falls! Its little wings flutter helplessly, but form a sort of parachute, to check its fall, while the mother, swift as an arrow, darts down under the helpless chick, spreads abroad her wings, and catches it on her back to rest.

There the curtain falls, and all that the congregation of Israel has left of the picture is the word of its great leader in applying the metaphor: "So the Lord alone did lead you!"

The lesson is simple,—God teaches His children to soar in the heavens of immortality. From helplessness, through faith, to the flight of angels—that is the

HUMAN NESTS STIRRED UP.

evolution of our race. God, the Eagle God, broods over our nests—watching, nourishing, feeding, waiting, strengthening, lulling, teaching, fluttering, screaming, tossing, catching, bearing, until at last the child of immortality has faith and strength and training enough to take the wings of the morning, and fly away, and be at rest.

Our God is an attentive parent. That is manifestly a lesson of the text. See that mother hen talking to her brood, as she gathers them under her wings. That is what God's Son wanted to do with the children of Jerusalem. And that is what God wants to do with us, His offspring. Our good is His constant, yea, His chief concern. He deviseth means for us. That is His eternal work. Do you doubt that? What do you think God is doing? The machinery of the universe does not harass Him. The earth keeps her path; the sun holds his place; the stars run their courses. They never clash; He assigns to each his place; He calleth them all by their names. What then is God's chief concern? His children! God the Father is greater than God the engineer! "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work!" What did the Saviour mean by that? He meant that God is working all the time, even on the Sabbath day, to win His children back to Him!

He is an attentive parent; His children are the objects of His care. You parents know it, for your

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

chief concern is your children's welfare. The piano stays where you set it; the chairs and the tables and the dishes and the doilies behave themselves—unless the wife goes away for a few days and leaves the husband to manage things. But, normally, you don't worry very much about the various pieces of furniture. They are not constantly in your mind. But the children are! You devise means! Means to keep the boys at home! Means to interest the girls! Oh, boy, boy, mother doesn't sleep sound o' nights; she is brooding, devising, about you! Oh, man, woman, the Father is keeping awake! The nest is watched. He, watching over Israel, slumbers not nor sleeps. That is the kind of God I can easily believe in!

Oh, Parents, hearken! God watches over your children. They must pass through earth's sin-laden atmosphere, but God curves His hand to protect them from pestilential winds. How they get through without contamination sometimes seems a miracle! It is like the process that purifies the water that we drink! The doctors and microscopists would have us all killed every morning, killed dead as smelts, if it weren't for a natural miracle! They say that the germs of pollution from a score of Canadian and American cities have been poured into that water. Sarnia and Port Huron, Windsor and Detroit, Cleveland and Buffalo all cast their sewage into the great lakes and we drink the

HUMAN NESTS STIRRED UP.

water! Ah, but meanwhile a miracle has been performed. The water has had the nest stirred up. It has been tossed by the winds, filtered by the sands, hurried by the rapids, hurled by the cataract, sifted by the whirlpool, and lo, it is pure!

God performs a miracle with your children. You, mother, are quite exercised over your son or your daughter leaving for school, or going out into the big world. Years ago, when the little tot kissed you at the gate and toddled off with slate and book to school, you had a foregleam of the day when the trunk would be packed, and now, alas! that day has dawned when that child must leave you and go out into the world of dangers and traps and decoys. But it is the way of the eagle's nest; it is the inevitable way of the mother's home.

And the wings of the Most High will protect them. They will go through unscathed. They will answer mother's prayers! And they never altogether lose their veneration for mother's Christ.

Do you recall Ian Maclaren's chapter, "His First Sermon"? The young preacher was getting ready for his first Sunday in his first parish. His old aunt thought back five years to the death-bed of his mother, when the boy's sobbing shook the bed, and a whispered dying voice said: "Dinna greet like that, John, nor break yir hert, for it's the will o' God, and that's aye

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

best. Here's my watch and chain, and when ye feel the chain about yir neck, it will mind ye of yir mother's arms. Ye'll no forget me, John, I ken that weel, and I'll never forget you. I loved ye here, and I'll love ye yonder. Ye'll follow Christ, and gin He offers ye His Cross, ye'll no refuse it, for He aye carries the heavy end Himsel'. He's guided yir mother a' thae years, and been as guid as a husband since yir father's death, and He'll hold me fast to the end. He'll keep ye too; and, John, I'll be watching fer ye. Ye'll no fail me. If God calls ye to the ministry, ye'll no refuse, an' the first day ye preach in yer ain kirk, speak a gude word for Jesus Christ, an' John, I'll hear ye that day though ye'll no see me, and I'll be satisfied."

God did call him to preach, and now, after the years of preparation, he is ordained, and settled in his parish with his good old aunt as housekeeper. But the simplicity of his faith has been clouded just a little and he has told her that the first sermon must be a declaration of the present position of theological thought.

His aunt was troubled, and when he urged her to speak and tell him all that was in her heart, she gradually brought to his mind his great responsibility and the need of the poor dying folk, and added, "And oh, laddie, be sure ye say a gude word for Jesus Christ."

The young minister's face whitened, and he went back to his room in agitation. His mother's faith

HUMAN NESTS STIRRED UP.

came to him. In the very glories of the sunset, he seemed to see his mother's spirit enter the Golden City, washed in the blood of the Lamb. His new sermon he crushed in his hands and dashed into the fire. He cried, as he did five years before, "My mother, my mother!"—and an indescribable peace filled his heart. He prepared another sermon now, with Jesus Christ for a theme, and thrilled all in the kirk. And in his study, his old aunt flung her arms about his neck and said: "Dinna be cast down, laddie. Yir mither has heard every word, and is satisfied, for ye did it in remembrance o' her, and yon was yir mither's sermon."

O parent, thy God is putting His pillar of fire and cloud about thy children, and they shall be kept, and they shall answer thy prayers and preach the sermon of their mother's life.

But, though God is constantly attentive unto His children's wants, the text also tells us that He is a disturbing parent. He is as an eagle stirring up the nest of her young. It is necessary. We cannot quite understand it, any more than the eaglet can understand the process of his aerial education. But it is essential. Fancy an eagle leaving her overgrown babes in the nest till they fatten into the clumsiness of a barnyard fowl! Full grown eagles in the nest are just like adult children would be in their trundle beds of home. If we are left too long in the downy nest of mother's

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

pampering indulgence, we will be absolutely good for nothing.

Parents, you must submit to the inevitable stirring up of the home-nest. It is your hardest task, but God will help you, even as He helped your mother and father on the day when you first used your wings. To me, a mother's tears at her daughter's wedding furnish no jarring note. Let her have her little cry; she is passing through one of life's crises. The bride is so happy! Indeed, for just a moment mother wonders how any daughter can be so jubilant on the day she is leaving home, but the vision of her own wedding-day arises before her, and, alas, she cannot recollect that she was sorry for father and mother. The daughter does not altogether realize the new station she is to take—that while she has been the protected fledgling of the old nest, she must be the protecting mother-bird in the new. The ticket is bought for Saskatchewan, perchance; the new nest will be a sod house, twelve by ten. Very good, let the young eagles try their wings!

So death comes to us. It is the stirring up of our physical nest. We are mere weaklings now. At length we are to fly! We must be pushed out of the nest. We must not remain poor humans with wings unstretched. The divine must be developed in us; the pinions of our faith must be exercised and strengthened. Pathos,

HUMAN NESTS STIRRED UP.

nobility, love must grow in us. We must get above the selfish plane of sensual indulgence. We must go to school with the Eagle-God. His instruction may seem cruel, but it is for our development. We must learn to soar!

But God be praised, His wings are always beneath the apprenticed eaglet! His chastening and His providence are always joined; the disciplined soul is always divinely protected.

Are you perplexed by sudden calamities, my brother? Does it appear that God has exchanged His smile for a frown? Did He seem gentle until now? Do you feel His talons for the first time? Do you seem to be tossed out of the nest? Believe me, it is a necessary part of God's program for your schooling. It is not best that everything should be forever carried to you and dropped into your mouth. Suddenly comes a shock,—a death, a sickness, a position lost, a business failure, a problem about the children. And you look up and say: "O my God, Thou hast been kind to me heretofore; Thou art cruel now. Thou didst lullaby me yesterday; Thou roarest against me to-day."

Be calm, my brother! God is but teaching you to fly. The first lesson is the hardest. He must toss you. This is your moment of falling over the edge of the nest. Immediately you will feel beneath you the wings of the Divine!

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Each sternness is balanced by a kindness. For every frightening "stirreth up her nest" is the soothing "spreadeth abroad her wings." For every "fluttereth over her young" is a "beareth them on her wings." "There shall no evil befall thee." The Father who flings you out to shift for yourself will meanwhile care for you by the spreading of His wings. "Beneath thee are the Everlasting Arms."

Some day we'll understand. A friend of mine had a son whom he had coddled and pampered over-long. The boy was a trifle lazy, and just delicate enough to furnish an occasional excuse for his indifference to any kind of work. Finally, however, when half through his twenties the young man tossed himself out of the parental nest, by running away and getting married. It was about the first time in his life that he had really shown any independence. But, alas, the wings had been unused so long that flying was well nigh impossible. His father, however, vowed that now he must shift for himself, and while, secretly, he felt like helping him out of his abundant store, he knew that to do so now would be an irreparable mistake. So the boy eked out a very scant living with his young wife. Finally he came to my parsonage for a small loan. His father not only repaid me the loan, but gave me \$50 in trust, to lend Charlie from time to time when I really thought he needed help. But I was not to tell him that

HUMAN NESTS STIRRED UP.

the money came from his father. I was to take his I.O.U. for it, and let him know that I expected to be repaid as soon as he found employment.

He soon came for another loan. I gave him \$5 of his father's money. He took it, thanked me, and stood at the door, hat in hand and eyes downcast, murmuring, "If my father would only do the right thing by me, and give me a lift, I wouldn't need to ask you." I didn't remind him that his father had been doing nothing but giving him lifts during the twenty-five years of his life.

Within a week he came again. I gave him another \$5, and once more he stood in the hallway and said, "If my dad would only help me as he should, I wouldn't need to ask strangers."

And so, by fives and tens, he got the whole amount in my hands. Then his father died, and left him a fairly comfortable income in the care of prudent executors. The young man was honest enough to take \$50 out of his first remittance, and bring it to me. I told him it belonged to him, for I had loaned him his father's money. He stared at me a moment after I had explained the case; then he broke down and wept. "So I have been blaming my good old father for neglecting me," he cried, "and here I find that he has been helping me all the time."

Now that father was really putting his wings of help

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

underneath his son, even while the young fellow imagined he was being forsaken. So, my brother, will we find that while we were lamenting our abandonment, the Father's Everlasting Arms were under us all the time.

God's discipline of training is always intended to fit us for spiritual service. The nest-stirred eaglet is just beginning his life. So the sorrow-stirred soul is equipped for the most helpful service to humanity. No one is fitted for speaking the word of cheer to earth's sorrowing hearts who has not himself passed through trial. And having had sorrows, we must make the right use of them. We may make of them curses or blessings.

I recall the case of a man who allowed a great shock of sorrow to completely neutralize the remaining thirty years of his life. He came home one evening to find that his wife, unbalanced by sickness, had taken her own life. It was the first great grief that had ever come to him. Up to that day his business career, his church and social relations, his domestic life, had been a harmony of happiness. This sudden calamity changed his whole course. He retired from business, withdrew from all society, and gave himself over to the nursing of his grief. After a hermit life of over a quarter century, he died forgotten and unlamented.

How opposite the experience of a brave woman down

HUMAN NESTS STIRRED UP.

in Philadelphia. She had a beautiful little boy, her joy and her pride. Some of my older readers will recollect how, about thirty years ago, that boy was snatched away from her by kidnappers, and the whole continent joined in a vain search for Charlie Ross. The mothers of all America prayed for that Philadelphia mother. For a while she felt that her woe would drive her insane. Was her child dead or alive? Was he near her or far away from her? Was he a good man or a bandit trained by wicked men?

But she made one tremendous effort, and conquered even her bitter sorrow. She went to her pastor and asked him for an opportunity to teach a class of boys, so that in her terrible loneliness she might at least help to bring up some other people's lads. She spent her days hunting for boys. She has wielded an influence in that church at Germantown, Philadelphia, that has reached hundreds of youths. The terrible stirring up of her nest made her strong. The awful thorn in her flesh has never been removed, but the voice of the God of Paul has spoken unto her, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Finally, all this is preparatory to heaven. We must pass through tribulation to glory. Rev. John McNeill tells of a friend who had an eagle, caught while young and raised among the ducks and chickens in an immense wire-netting cage. Moving to a distant place,

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

the owner of the eagle was persuaded to give the bird of the air its freedom. He opened the door of the big coop, and waited for the eagle to come out. How astonished he was! But he seemed to simply feel that this was a little larger than his cage, and made no effort to use his wings. Then the owner took the big fellow and lifted him to the garden wall. He looked down at his liberator as if perplexed. The sun had just been hidden behind a cloud; now it shone out with light and warmth. The eagle lifted his eyes, and pulled himself up. He raised a wing and stretched it; then pushed out the other wing; then with a scream of delight, his piercing eyes, looking towards the sky, he arose, and with all the grace of an eagle's flight, swept through the air with a series of spiral curves, rising with every circle without perceptible effort, and was soon a vanishing speck in the blue heavens!

O Christian, whose nest is stirred, get ready to soar. Death will soon open the door into the infinite. Angels will lift you to the garden wall of yon cloud and let you rest until you catch the enthusiasm of the air. With a glad cry you will spread your wings and soar, and shout with Dwight L. Moody, "Earth is receding; Heaven is opening!"

You will not halt until you have reached the great eyrie, up yonder in the presence of the Father.

X.

JOSEPH, THE DREAMER.

"And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren; and they hated him yet the more.

"And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

"And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh."—Gen. 37: 5, 18, 19.

X.

JOSEPH, THE DREAMER.

GREAT men are our brothers. We are never envious of them, for we feel instinctively that what they do in their large sphere, we do in a smaller but similar way. Joseph was an example of the exceptional man. Here and there, in the passing of the ages, Nature gives us a specimen of her perfect work. Selecting the best materials of the time, she brings forth a genius for the sons of men to gaze upon, that they may rejoice in the greatness of their race, and be encouraged to climb nearer to the ideal set before them.

Joseph was the sum of the highest qualities of his fathers. He was Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in a revised and complete edition. He was peculiarly the son of Israel in his tenacity. Jacob has sometimes been pointed out as a type of the lucky man. But under the surface of life-long luck you are sure to find initiative, diligence and perseverance. People pass by the estate of my rich neighbor and say: "Lucky dog! Everything he touches turns to gold." But I bade him good-night at bedtime one evening, wishing him a good rest, when he said, "Yes, after three more hours' work I'll have some rest, I hope." I expressed surprise,

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

and he added: "Oh, it is not every evening I do this, but about three nights a week you'll find me dropping my mail into the box at your corner at about one o'clock in the morning." So it wasn't all luck that made my neighbor rich. Do you recall that Jacob waited seven years for Rachel, and then had to wait seven more? Any young fellow who is patient enough to serve a master fourteen years for his daughter reveals a tenacity that deserves to win.

But the biography of the exceptional man is the same in species as that of his less conspicuous brothers. The principle involved in the evolution of a Joseph differs in no respect from the experiences of the plodder in every walk of life. First is the dream of a high ideal; second, the tremendous struggle against obstacle; third, the victory that must eventually come.

The first thing worth telling of Joseph was his dream of the future. He made a possible error in tact in telling it to his brethren. "I dreamed that we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose and stood upright; and behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf." That was a vision of future exploits. Every castle must first be an air-castle, and afterwards one of stone and mortar. First, the great sky-scraper is in the architect's mind, next, on the draughtsman's blue paper, last, in the builder's stone and brick, on terra firma.

Dreams usually indicate what we have been thinking about during the day. Day-dreams represent the wish

JOSEPH, THE DREAMER.

and hope of youth. Joseph's dream was doubtless in keeping with his thinking. His ambition was mixed with some dross of arrogance and imprudence, but the instinct of greatness was in him and it had to reveal itself. The heart's ruling passion cannot be hidden. Isaac Watts, who wrote more hymns than any other man save Charles Wesley, began his verse-making in early childhood. His ignorant father, after forbidding the pastime in vain, finally decided to whip it out of him. While stretched over the parental knee the young culprit cried:

"Dear father! Do some pity take,
And I will no more verses make."

The beginning of success is wishing. Wishing begets dreaming, dreaming begets yearning, yearning begets effort, effort begets success. Our wishes, some one has said, are the foregleams of our capabilities. Wishing is not a crime. But not wishing hard enough is very wrong. The feeble wish sits in the valley, gazes upon the mountain's summit, and makes some poor excuse for not undertaking the climb. The strong yearning beholds the shining height for a moment, and sets off to scale the innumerable crags that intervene between it and the coveted goal. An orator won much applause by declaring that some people have wishbones where their backbones ought to be. True, the spinal column should not be supplanted, but a stout backbone and a strong wishbone, each in its proper place, will go a great way towards making a fine bird or a stalwart man.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Our dreams are more or less vague prophecies of our possibilities. Faith, being the substance of things hoped for, is the link that joins the dream to its fulfilment. And the first faith that we require is faith in ourselves. The man who starts out by asserting his lack of genius, deploring his obscure birth, or his alien nationality, or croaking about his ill-luck, is predestined to fail. Old General Scott laid his failure in the Presidential race to the ridicule cast upon his letter of acceptance, which, awkwardly enough, began by saying: "Gentlemen, I have just arisen from a hasty bowl of soup to answer your kind letter." Wags at once prophesied that he would fall back into the soup. From that began the slang phrase, "In the soup." Ever after his defeat, the General attributed the cause of the disastrous stampede from him during the campaign to the accidental phrasing of that letter. The fact is that there were a dozen good reasons why his fellow countrymen did not enthuse over General Scott's candidacy. One reason was that he was timid and wavering in declaring his policies; another, that he seemed to think it the part of modesty, whenever congratulated on his nomination, to protest that they could easily have found a better man; a third, that he lacked faith in the permanence of the Union, this being evidenced by his remark at the time of the secession of the rebel States: "I would say to my erring sisters, 'Go in peace!'" Self-faith is the first requisite.

JOSEPH, THE DREAMER.

George D. Prentice said: "Show me a man with a great idea of himself, and I will show you a man who will never have another great idea." Of this, Bishop Fowler remarks: "This is so well said that one almost wishes that it were true. But it is not true. A man must believe in himself to get results. Faith is the cohesive power of the mind."

To do our best it is also necessary to believe fully that we have a high origin, and that God made us with the definite object of having us do our part in bringing His world unto perfection. If a man has the materialistic notion that the human race is an accident, he lacks a great factor in true success. The highest conception I can have of my origin is that of the first chapter of Genesis: "Let us make man in our own image." There can be nothing more productive of self-respect than that. The man who believes that he came from the deep-sea ooze of the ocean; that he was accidentally thrown upon the shore, dried by the winds, aroused to maggot life by the sun, turned tadpole by the waters, brought into monkey life by the process of ages, and into manhood through countless ages more, and all this without an intelligent Master Mind directing the evolution,—that man misses the noble inspiration which spurs on all who are conscious that they are co-workers together with God. We have far greater evidence that the crown has fallen from our heads than that we are the offspring of accidental maggots. I can believe that I fell from a high state of holiness,

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

for I can see angelic instincts in many men, despite their sin. I can see in the tattered garments of our poor righteousness, the remnants of the purple robes of a king. God gave us the inheritance of princes. Even though we have fallen, we are still the sons of God.

That gives us faith in our possibilities. We can believe that we are to do something worth while. Noah believed in his task; Moses had faith in his mission. The Bible is the great book of faith in us. No other volume makes us of so much account. It traces our pedigree back to God. It tells us that we were conceived in righteousness. It explains our fall in a way which seems altogether reasonable, and assures us that we are capable of reaching heights far more sublime than those from which slipped our infantile feet. It flatters us by saying that we are co-workers together with God. It promises us a crown of majesty. It has faith in us, and we close its lid to go away with high resolves to overcome and attain.

The true hero shows his faith in his dream by acting upon it. Hark, Bow Bells are ringing! What are they saying? Well, to the enterprising coster they say, "Wake up." To the lazy coster they say, "Sleep on." It all depends on what the waking cockney wants to hear. But to that tired lad seated on Highgate Hill, resting after his flight from his master's house, Bow Bells are saying: "Turn again, Whittington, thrice Lord Mayor of London." They speak so plainly, the

JOSEPH, THE DREAMER.

boy rises and trudges back to his task and his scolding cook. I like to read of Dick Whittington. The story of his life assures us that even then, six hundred years ago, there was hope for the poor youth who coupled diligence and frugality. I do not like to have the story of his cat called a legend. There is as much authority for it as for this narrative of Joseph and his dream. Besides, we may be as sure of the actual existence of Sir Richard Whittington as we are of King Alfred or king-maker Warwick. His name appears in the records of the city of London as its Lord Mayor for three different terms, covering the years 1397, 1406 and 1419. He compiled the first directory for the city of London, rebuilt the nave of Westminster Abbey, and was a creditor in large amounts to Henry the Fourth and his son Henry the Fifth. The invoices are still in existence which show that he bought on the continent the wedding trousseaux of Princesses Blanche and Philippa. And the foundation of the fortune of this merchant prince of the Middle Ages seems to have been a cat and a day-dream.

There was another young dreamer, also an Englishman, who acted upon his first vision of future wealth, and brought wishbone and backbone into harmony. In his early youth the family manor at Daylesford was sold by foreclosure, and he and his good old aunt were thrown into poverty. He comforted her by saying: "Aunt, I'll go over the sea, and get gold; then I'll come back and buy Daylesford." He carried out his

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

promise to the letter. He went to India, climbed from one clerkship to another, became Governor-General Warren Hastings, and returned to England to buy back the estate in time for his aunt to die in the house of her fathers.

I love the Hoosier Poet's rhymes better than ever since I heard of the first spur under which his ambition was urged.

His father's estate near Indianapolis became involved, and passed out of the family hands. James Whitcomb Riley had to be a helpless witness to his parents' disconsolate grief. He was a very young man then, and his verses were unknown outside of his own little community. He suddenly made a resolution to buy back that farm with the earnings of his pencil. Likely it was this decision which gave him the pluck to persevere until the merit of his work became known. He finally succeeded in getting the necessary money together. He and his sisters hurried off father and mother for a visit West. Then they completed the purchase, and arranged the old place just as it had been before the failure. They moved back all the furniture, and placed it as mother had it arranged. Then they sent for the old folks. They brought them out from town in a closed carriage, from which they emerged to behold the familiar scenes of their happiest days. The young man took a big envelope from his pocket and handed his father the deed to the estate. When the facts fully dawned upon him, the good old

JOSEPH, THE DREAMER.

Quaker fell weeping on his son's neck, and all he could say was: "James, James, thou art a most remarkable son!"

One day when I was a junior reporter on a St. Louis, Missouri, paper, I was told to rush over to the Southern Hotel and interview Henry M. Stanley, the great explorer. I went with some trepidation, imagining him to be about as surly and taciturn as his pictures represented him. My suspicions were confirmed when the bell-boy came back from the room whither I had sent him with my card, to say: "He wants to be excused." But I had been told not to fail, and I dare not return empty-handed. I dashed up the stairway and across the court to his suite of rooms. I was almost at the door when out came Mr. Stanley and his bride. The face did seem surly and was shaded by a grey slouch hat with which he had that instant covered a head of white. I threw myself on his mercy, saying: "Oh, Mr. Stanley, I really must have a word with you. I sent up my card but—" "Well, if you must, you must, my man,"—and I was quite sure there was a sympathetic element in his gutturals. He knew that he, an old newspaper man, could rescue a poor young reporter from a grievous dilemma by a five minutes' interview. He gave me material for half-a-column, and sent me away dancing happy. "It was in this good old town," he said in parting, "that I had my first dream of doing something worth while." He followed that vision with

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

unremitting tenacity. James Gordon Bennett knew the stuff there was in him, and allowed him the opportunity of bringing his dream into fulfilment. But the first wish in the city by the Mississippi, and the final achievement in the headwaters of the Nile, had to be joined by faith.

Our dream is our ideal. Our idealist is one who has faith in the copy which God has set down for him to follow. He believes in the perfect, and tries to bring it into the present. Between what we are and what we ought to be there is a Niagara gorge, which the idealist tries to span with a bridge of faith. He who strives to bring up his mental and moral condition to his ideal will ultimately succeed! Henry Clay saw the Senate from the cornfields of his boyhood, and while hoeing, delivered orations to the cornhills, and hewed down arguments with the thistles. Christine Nillson was a poor Swedish flower girl. She said that while singing in the streets of Stockholm, she had day-dreams of her future success, and shutting her eyes, imagined that the little straggling group of hearers before her was changed into a crowded opera house audience, and accordingly gave them her very best. A rich count, hearing her at a street corner, was struck with her wonderful energy and vivacity, and arranged for her musical education. She bridged the street corner and the opera hall by faith. Bishop Charles H. Fowler tells of a colored standard bearer in one of the battles of the Civil War. Pushed well up in front, he soon found himself alone.

JOSEPH, THE DREAMER.

The breath of battle had swept away his comrades. The captain called out: "Bring back that flag; you will lose it if you don't watch out!" The black hero answered: "Massa Captain, dis yer flag never goes back. You bring up dem men dah!" Your ideal is your flag. Never draw it back, but bring up to it all the forces of your strength and talents.

13
12

XI.

JOSEPH, THE HERO.

"And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him. And they took him and cast him into a pit. . . . And they sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. . . . And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's. . . . And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man."—Gen. 37: 23, 28, 36; 39: 2.

XI.

JOSEPH, THE HERO.

OUR dreamer had a rude awakening. His brothers had no visions of their future, and they grew impatient at the recital of his dreams, especially so since he was his father's favorite child, and as such wore a prince's coat. Their envy grew into hate. "Let us kill him," they cried, as they saw him coming across the plains, far from his sire's protection, "and we shall see what becomes of his dreams!" His eldest brother, Reuben, saved him from death by suggesting that they cast him into a pit and let him starve to death, intending then to release him secretly and send him home. This the murderous fellows acceded to, and then sat down to eat their supper with a relish. But Reuben's plan did not altogether succeed. In his absence a new scheme of villainy is hatched. A company of Midianite merchants, bound for Egypt with their wares, are passing, and Judah proposes to sell the lad to these speculators, who buy anything they can turn over with profit, from a pound of spices to a captive for the slave markets of Egypt.

So our young dreamer is hurried away, and the caravan becomes a speck on the horizon, a speck as

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

small to the vision of the heartless brothers as the hope of release appeared to the eyes of the young slave.

Every dreamer must soon awaken to the stern realities about him. Between his dreams and their ultimate realization are obstacles that seem to completely block his way. In Joseph's case it was the hatred of mediocrity that first confronted him. Satisfied lowness is uncomfortable at the sight of effort. Time-serving employes turn the cold shoulder to an energetic fellow worker. Slovens scorn the youth who cultivates neatness. Moral derelicts ridicule the virtuous.

But even bondage could not smother the nobility in Joseph. He earned a reputation as a slave, and, with the handicap of chains, climbed the ladder of success. Read the testimonial: "And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand."

Was not that in itself worth the effort? The lowest sphere is worthy of our best endeavors. Martin Van Buren earned his first testimonial by the painstaking he showed in cleaning cuspidors in his father's tavern. A stranger, watching him, said, "Boy, you are too good for that work," and secured him a position that led to advancement. Are you a slave, my boy? "Yes,"

JOSEPH, THE HERO.

you say, "I am goaded, nagged, driven, criticized in my work." Then earn your first recommendation here and now. Let them drive you ever so hard, do not leave the place until you can carry away with you the word that you performed your tasks with credit. You will hear from these early days. The telephone rings and a voice asks, "Did Johnny Jones work for you?" "Yes, he was our messenger boy at \$3.50 per week." "How did he do?" "Oh, just so so. He didn't like the work very well; soldiered a good deal; watched the clock pretty closely." "Thank you." Meanwhile Johnny Jones is waiting in the outer office while the inquiry is being made. In applying for the \$6 job he didn't quite realize that any questions would be asked as to how he filled the \$3.50 place. Nor does he altogether understand the situation when he is dismissed with the explanation that they need a boy with a little more experience. The telephone rings in another office. "Hello, was William Smith in your employ?" "Oh yes, Billy worked here some eighteen months." "Can you recommend him?" "Recommend him? I should say we can. Billy can have a job here any time. We never had a more willing boy. He was always cleaning up the store, and washing the windows; couldn't do enough." The man comes back from the telephone booth to put William Smith on the pay roll.

Get your testimonials now! These days are linked to the future by a chain of steel. Booker T. Wash-

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

ington, the president of Tuskegee Institute, went back to the Virginia plantation where he had been a slave forty years before. Blacks and whites remembered him as a good slave boy. The grandson of his old master showed him a paper giving a list of things sold at auction. Among the horses, cows and pigs was an item, "Booker, \$400." One day at his new master's place the colored people were all called into the big house to hear an announcement. His mother leaned over him and said, "My boy, we are free!" Mother and son went to work in a coal mine in West Virginia. Here Booker heard men speak of the negro school at Hampton. He yearned to go, and saved his earnings so that his mother might not be left penniless when he made the venture. One day he wrapped his belongings in a kerchief and set out on his long tramp. On arriving at the school a teacher was examining a group of candidates for admission. "She looked at my feet, and must have noticed that the great toe of each foot was peeping through the boot. She sent me to sweep the recitation room. I swept it three times and dusted it four times. The teacher, by the way, was a sister to Justice Brewer of the United States Supreme Court. When she came to inspect my work she took her handkerchief and wiped the chairs and tables. Then she stooped down and gave the corners a good brush, but she could not find a speck of dust. That was my matriculation examination, and she said, 'You'll do,' and arranged so that I could work out my

JOSEPH, THE HERO.

board and tuition." That little school now has fourteen hundred students, and its famous president is the ex-slave, Dr. Booker T. Washington.

But another trial comes close upon the heels of the first. Now he has to cope with temptation. A single struggle does not make a giant, but one species of victory over hardship renders the next conflict, even if of another nature, less formidable. The old Scandinavian belief that the strength of a vanquished enemy entered into the victor had in it a great element of truth. His integrity amid the surroundings of his bondage lent him strength to resist the temptations of luxury. The Bible is a plain book, full of warnings against sins about which society feels compelled to be silent. Therefore, some over-modest people lament much over the bluntness of sacred narrative. I have known folks who could read novels that venture quite too near the brink of decency become greatly exercised over Genesis. I have met men who attended banquets of disgraceful after-dinner features, express their violent displeasure over the sensational denunciations of the pulpit. Yes, and I have heard of women who could sit through the suggestive performances of notorious actresses without once saying, "Husband, let us go home; this is no place for us," who object to one frank word of warning being given their daughters from the sacred desk. From cover to cover, this good old Bible proclaims that Potiphar's wife means Ruin!

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Joseph refused! 'The most insidious temptation is answered with a firm "No!" And his reason gives us even to-day a full view of his fidelity: "Behold, my master hath committed all that he hath into my hand. How, then, can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Loyalty to a trust committed to your charge goes hand in hand with loyalty to God. Grand old Andrew Marvell was approached by Lord Danby, who was buying up the members of Parliament for the corrupt uses of King James the Second. At parting from his old school-fellow, writes Samuel Smiles, the Lord Treasurer slipped into his hand an order on the Treasury for £1000, and then went to his chariot. Marvell, looking at the paper, calls after the Treasurer, "My lord, I request another moment." They went up again to the garret, and Jack, the servant boy, was called. "Jack, child, what had I for dinner yesterday?" "Don't you remember, sir? You had the little shoulder of mutton that you ordered me to bring from a woman in the market." "Very right, child. What have I for dinner to-day?" "Don't you know, sir, that you bid me lay by the blade-bone to broil?" "'Tis so; very right, child, go away. My lord," said Marvell, turning to the Treasurer, "do you hear that? Andrew Marvell's dinner is provided; there's your piece of paper. I want it not. I know the sort of kindness you intended. I live here to serve my constituents; the ministry may seek men for their purpose; I am not one."

JOSEPH, THE HERO.

I count among my dearest friends a man who was elected secretary of a large corporation. A few days before the annual meeting he and the company's president were going over the books together. "We have too big a surplus," said the latter. "The stockholders will not expect more than ten per cent. We have \$10,000 too much. We can add it to the cost of that dredge, have the vouchers changed, and make \$5,000 each." The secretary protested against such a dishonest transaction. The president replied: "You haven't been in this school long enough, my boy; let me educate you a little." "My mother attended to my education in honesty," replied the secretary. The annual meeting was held, and the directors rejoiced in their year's profits. But on the recommendation of the president a new secretary was elected, the deposed man being given a subordinate position. A year later the surplus was practically nil. An investigation was instituted and the president was convicted of robbing the company of a large amount. At the next election the ex-secretary was elected to the presidency.

But it is not to be expected that loyalty to duty is always rewarded so speedily. In some instances the hero confronts new difficulties before the day of his triumph. Joseph, for example, has to face foul calumny. In the rage of her unsatiated lust, his master's wife maligns him by a damnable falsehood. He is made out to be a base scoundrel, rewarding Potiphar's kindness by an insult to his wife. The evi-

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

dence is all against the lad. His garment, snatched from him while fleeing from the temptress, is produced in testimony of the grave charge against him. The master's wrath is kindled; faithful Joseph is thrust into the dungeon! Alas, even the poor opportunity of a slave seems to slip from his hands. What hope is there now?

But some men win even in jail! Again let us read the testimonial that comes down through the ages from that prison: "But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper."

A ray of hope can pierce the wall of a penitentiary cell. A writer tells of his visit to a penal institution in the West. In one cell he found architectural drawings covering the entire interior. The warden explained that the occupant had taken a correspondence course while serving his term and had just received an architect's diploma. Moreover, a business firm was ready to hire him and give him another chance to lead an honest life as soon as he received his freedom.

The opportunity comes to Joseph through the misfortune of a court official. The butler and the baker of

JOSEPH, THE HERO.

Pharaoh's palace had aroused their lord's anger against them, and are cast into the prison of which Potiphar is governor. One morning the newcomers appear dejected, and Joseph asks, "Why do you look so downcast to-day?" "Why, each of us had a very curious dream last night which we cannot explain. Might you be able to shed any light on the matter?" We are ready to hear the slave respond: "Oh, no, no! I have nothing to do with dreams. I once got into serious trouble over telling my dreams; and besides, dreams are not to be trusted, for mine proved to be utterly false. I dreamed that I was to be pre-eminent over all my brothers, and here I am, a poor, imprisoned bond-servant, while my brothers are free herdsmen in Canaan." But he does not say that at all. On the contrary, if anyone had asked him just then about his present convictions concerning his boyhood dreams, he would have cried, "I still believe that they will come to pass."

The baker's dream was about three baskets of baked saw a vine of three branches, and it budded and blossomed before his gaze, and the clusters brought forth ripe grapes, which he pressed into the royal drinking cup, presenting the wine into Pharaoh's hand. "That means that in three days the king will send for you," explained Joseph, "and you will hand him his drink, as you have always done."

The baker's dream was about three baskets of baked meats, which he carried on his head. The birds came and consumed the delicacies intended for Pharaoh's

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

table. "Your dream is bad," says Joseph. "In three days shall Pharaoh lift your head from your shoulders and hang you on a tree. The birds shall eat your flesh as they ate the baked meats in the baskets."

Both dreams come true; the baker is hanged, and the butler is sent for with the announcement that he has received a king's-birthday pardon. As he leaves the prison in great glee, the interpreter of his dreams remarks: "Would you mind saying a good word for me to Pharaoh, when you get into his good graces once more, so as to get me out of here? I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews, and I have done nothing to merit my being flung into this dungeon." "Why certainly, certainly. I'll do what I can for you."

But the butler forgot! He belonged to a considerable class of folks that overlook promises made in the glow of some sudden good fortune.

Two years elapse. Joseph is still in the prison. Then Pharaoh takes his turn at dreaming. He dreams of cattle both fat and lean, and of ears of corn, both full and thin. The thing puzzles him; he sends for his magicians and tells them his dreams, but they utterly fail to explain them. Suddenly the butler comes to the rescue. "I do remember my faults this day," he declares, and he tells the king about the slave who so correctly interpreted his dream in the day of his adversity.

"Joseph, my boy, wake up! His Majesty wants to see you." "Oh? Well, I have been expecting a royal

JOSEPH, THE HERO.

command for some time, and yet it comes rather suddenly this morning. But I will be with you in a moment. Just wait till I slick up a bit. Now I'm ready; lead the way."

He is going up to the palace! Strike up the band! Play "See, the Conquering Hero Comes!" He is mounting the palace steps! The door swings open; he enters the royal presence!

Ah, handicaps merely show us and the world how sturdy we are. Obstacles simply demonstrate how strong a fetter a real will can break. "Tie me," cries a Samson, "and I will give you an exhibition in cord-snapping." "Shackle me on a galley ship," cries a Julius Cæsar, "and I will show you how to laugh and sing and jest, and cajole the captain into loosing my bonds, thereby giving me a chance to take him captive." "Ah, sell me," cries Joseph, "enslave me, tempt me, slander me, imprison me, and I will show you how to climb to the palace door! I am like a stream, you cannot stop me on my way to the sea. Come along, brothers; come along Midianite merchants; come along, General Potiphar; come along, Madame Potiphar; I am going into the palace; I shall stand before the king!"

XII.

JOSEPH, THE VICTOR.

"And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

"Now, therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life."—Gen. 45: 4, 5.

XII.

JOSEPH, THE VICTOR.

THE first great test of character is to bear adversity; the second, to bear prosperity. The temptation of reverse is to lose heart. The temptation of success is to "lose your head." Dizziness threatens the climber, never the prostrate man. The dangers of triumph are pride, pomposity, arrogance, vindictiveness.

Joseph avoided all these, thereby crowning his fortitude amid disasters with genuine nobility in success. The real purpose of his life was to do good. No man ever gained real distinction except by being, in one form or another, a savior of his fellows. The aim of true ambition is always to achieve great things, never to merely win a great name.

In Joseph's career the early dream about other men's sheaves bowing before his was entirely lost sight of. That is always an absolute necessity. Our boyhood visions of preferment over rivals may be useful as spurs towards diligence, but no sooner do we get into the actual race of life than we discover that our real purpose must not be to force acknowledgements of defeat from our competitors, but to win the prize of merit that lies beyond the pale of envious rivalry. You cannot

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

hope to accomplish much, my dear young man, if your dominant aim is to lord it over your friends or balance accounts with your enemies. Did you ever dream of a time in the distant future when you would be able to enjoy a kind of public vindication in the open of some Massey Hall for the enlightenment of your critics? You thought back over all the gossiping, carping, backbiting pests of humanity that swarmed along the path of your early endeavors, watching for an opportunity to disparage your ability, misinterpret your actions, and do you injury, and you said, "Some day, some day, I shall stand before them all in triumph and say, 'Now, acknowledge that you were wrong,' and I shall make them all bite the dust." That day will never come! By the time you acquire the reputation, or fame, or fortune, or excellence, for such a demonstration (and, mind, it is no idle dream to believe that you can do it), your critics of yesterday will either be dead or scattered to the four points of the compass. Some of them will deny that they ever were your ill-wishers. Better still, nearly all of them will be changed, chastened during the intervening years and ennobled. Best of all, you will be so different to their view that they will say: "Did you ever see such a transformation in a fellow? Why, he has lost all of those overbearing ways he used to have and has become a really fine man!" And if you should overhear their remarks, you will say, "Quite true."

Joseph's claim to distinction was his work. After

JOSEPH, THE VICTOR.

listening to Pharaoh's narration of his dream, interpreting it to be a prophecy of a seven years' famine, and suggesting a policy of conservation of natural resources during the seven years of plenty, the ruler of Egypt wanted to load him with honors. Pharaoh thought of position; Joseph spoke of work. Pharaoh evidently imagined that the young Hebrew could ward off the impending disaster by his occult powers; Joseph planned to do it by prudent measures and executive ability. Pharaoh gave him the royal ring, a prince's robe, a gold chain, and the obeisance of servants; all that Joseph wanted was to harness a kingdom for an industrial campaign.

A captain of industry has an office chair for his throne and a desk for his council board. He cares little for titles. During those seven strenuous years we read nothing to indicate that the new premier of Egypt spent a moment in useless ceremony; every sentence of the story tells of work! He traveled throughout the kingdom, established granaries, superintended harvesting, organized agencies. Not one word about enjoying honors.

But the tremendous leap from dungeon to palace, from a slave's task to a premier's triumphs, was not his greatest exploit. His supreme victory was not one of head, but of heart. The crucial moment in Joseph's life came one morning when he was receiving delegations from famine-stricken countries. There came before him ten long-bearded travelers in the garb of herdsmen.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Instantly he perceives that they are his brethren! They bow themselves before him with their faces to the earth. At last, at last! The dream has come true! Their sheaves are ko-towing to his sheaf! With the gloating spirit of a Shylock, he might have cried: "I have them on my hip. I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear them. At last, at last!"

A small-souled man might say this, but a Joseph, never! Instead, a lump rises in his throat. To hide his emotions he speaks roughly unto them. He calls them spies, and demands proof that they are the honest men they claim to be. This story they tell about an old father and twelve sons, one dead and the youngest at home, may all be false. To put the stamp of truth upon it, one of their number must go back and bring the lad they tell of; the rest shall stay in prison. But first he puts them all in ward three days; then he comes with a modified ultimatum. Only one need remain bound as a hostage; the others may carry back the corn and return with their youngest brother. If they thus verify their statements their lives will be spared.

All this is spoken through an interpreter, they not understanding the Egyptian language, the premier not being supposed to know Hebrew. So the ten brothers converse in their own tongue. They say: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." And Reuben, with an attempt at self-justification as

JOSEPH, THE VICTOR.

modern as it is ancient, adds in effect, "I told you so." That crime of twenty years ago is still the spectre of their lives! It has never grown dim in their memory. So vivid does it remain that they regard every impending calamity as the visitation of Heaven's vengeance.

Joseph hears their distressful conversation, and turns from the group to hide his tears. His heart is touched at the sight of his brothers' undiminished remorse. Moreover, it is a hopeful sign. He binds Simeon before their eyes, and sends the others away with their sacks filled with corn, and each man's purchase money in the mouth of his sack.

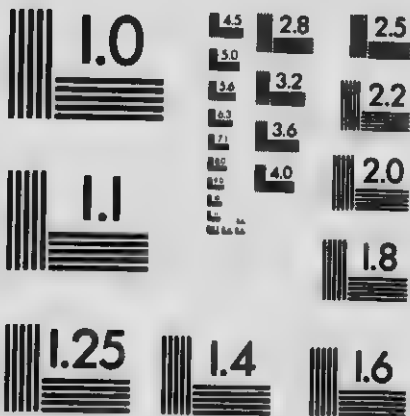
They return to Jacob and report. Their father steadfastly refuses to let them take Benjamin from him; even the offer of Reuben to stake the lives of his two sons does not turn him from his resolution. But the hunger of his people finally causes the patriarch to yield, and Israel's sons return to Egypt with their youngest brother. Jacob sends along a handsome present of spices, honey, myrrh, balm, nuts and almonds, to soften the heart of the tyrant, who seems bent on causing him woe. Joseph receives them with a banquet. The sight of Benjamin drives him from the table to weep. But he dries his tears and returns to the task of fathoming the hearts of his brothers.

For this purpose he adopts an ingenious plan. Once more he sends them away with both corn and money in their sacks. He also orders his silver cup to be put into Benjamin's sack. The brothers begin their jour-



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street 14609 USA
Rochester, New York
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

ney, only to be arrested just outside the city's gate by Joseph's steward and charged with theft. They indignantly deny the accusation, and declare their willingness to have the man in whose bag the missing cup should be found punished with death. In such an unlikely event they agree to become slaves. The steward moderates the stipulation by asking that the culprit only lose his liberty; the rest should be blameless. The search is made and the cup gleams from Benjamin's sack. Dejected, they return to the palace to face the wrath of the lord of the land. He condemns the guilty one to be his bondsman; the others may depart in peace.

Now, what will they do? Possess they still the hard hearts of twenty years ago? The loss of one brother and the breaking of their father's heart had been a small matter. How was it now? Here is the critical moment. Joseph's sounding-line is sinking deep into the hearts of his brothers. Judah, the same Judah who had suggested the selling of his brother Joseph to the Midianites, approaches to offer himself as a substitute for Benjamin! With the eloquence of blood-earnestness, he tells of his father's lament over Joseph, of his love for Benjamin, the only remaining child of Rachel, and of the certainty that their return without the lad would bring down the gray hairs of their father with sorrow to the grave. "Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide, instead of the lad, a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren."

JOSEPH, THE VICTOR.

The sounding-line reports love in those men's hearts! Joseph cries: "I am your brother; does my father yet live?" Then, in the words of our text, he comforts them, shows them how God overruled their crime for Egypt's good, aye, even for their good. "And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept; and Benjamin wept on his neck. Moreover, he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them; and after that his brethren talked with him."

Magnanimous Joseph! He won his greatest victory when he embraced those ten uncouth herdsmen.

We cannot linger to witness the joyous reunion of father and son, the princely reception that Pharaoh gave Jacob and his company, and the auspicious settlement of the newcomers in Goshen. But one final incident properly belongs to our subject. Jacob having pronounced his immortal benedictions upon all, has died his tranquil death. Now is shown one last remnant of the old selfish spirit of the regenerated brethren of Joseph. They still retain something of the suspiciousness of the culprits they once were. They say: "Now that our father is dead, and the restraint of his presence is removed, it may be that Joseph will have his revenge." They do not know their brother's heart, even after all the tokens of love he has given them. It takes some people a long time to overcome their lifelong habit of misinterpreting the motives of others. They send a message to Joseph, with the words: "Thy father did command before he died, saying, 'So shall

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee, now, the trespass of thy brethren and their sin, for they did unto thee evil.'” Then they made their own plea: “And now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father.”

“And Joseph wept when they spake unto him, and said, Fear not; for am I in place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good. Now, therefore, fear ye not; I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.” Now the last ignoble vestige of their old narrowness must have vanished.

Joseph, the dreamer, hero and victor, is dying. His farewell message is full of hope for his kindred. They stoop down to catch his last words: “God will take care of you—and take you back home to Canaan again—and when you go, take my remains with you—for I love you all.”

The real test of a career is in what it leaves to posterity as a legacy of influence. “Die when I may,” wrote Abraham Lincoln, “I want it said of me by those who know me best that I always plucked a thistle, and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow.”

An old backwoodsman once gave me a striking illustration of what the real aim of life should be. We had spent our vacation in camp, and were about to embark for our ten-mile canoe voyage down to the portage, where the wagon would be waiting to carry us back to civilization. Sailor bags, grips and bundles were

JOSEPH, THE VICTOR.

stowed away in the birch-bark, and we were waiting impatiently for old man Crumpy, our squatter neighbor, who was to take the ladies ahead in his new Peterboro.

At length we heard him in the woods behind the cabin, chopping wood. How annoying it was! And what was he doing it for? I ran up the hill, through the underbrush, around the shack and back—there was the old guide carrying a great armful of pine sticks, which he deposited on the porch, carefully covering it with bark. "What are you doing, Crumpy?" I shouted. "You're delaying the start, and you yourself said that we must hurry to get across the lake before the wind rises." Even the calm, quiet tone of the old man's answer was a rebuke to my scolding note. "Comin' right off," was his tranquil reply. "Ye see, I've jest chopped a bit of firewood fer whosomdever may happ'n along next. It's a sort of way we have, ye see, of doin' each other a friendly turn. For we can't never tell when we'd be glad if some 'un else had left a bit of kin'lin' fer us when we git to a campin' spot like this after dark some rainy night." I retreated to the landing in disorder. The old trapper had taught me a wholesome lesson which I quietly imparted to my fellow tourists as we took our places in the canoes.

Thousand times have I thought of it. He left the kindling for whoever might come after us. He didn't attach a card reading, "Compliments of Patrick

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Crumpy." Neither did he lock it up for some one lucky enough to have a key. Unlabeled and unaddressed, it was left as his contribution to the happiness of the next camper.

So may we all do. When we at last shove off from the landing of earth's camp for the voyage Home, may one pleasing recollection be that we left behind us a fagot for the next man!

XIII.

THE DEVIL'S PAWNSHOP.

" And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord."—
1 Kings 21: 20.

XIII.

THE DEVIL'S PAWNSHOP.

A BAD man and a bad woman make a terrible team to hitch to Satan's chariot. A wicked man is often held in check by a good woman; a bad woman may be curbed by a good man. But Ahab, Jezebel and Company is a firm in which the devil ever becomes a larger and larger stockholder until some Elijah can honestly say: "Sold out to Evil, body and soul!"

You recall the thrilling scene of the text. King Ahab wanted a little more land for his palace grounds at Jezreel. He cast covetous eyes on the vineyard of a respected citizen, Naboth by name. Quite properly he offered the owner a good price, or a better piece of land in exchange. Very properly, too, Naboth declined the offer on the ground that he couldn't think of parting with an estate so long in the possession of his family.

This slight interference with his plans was enough to upset the king. It threw him into a fit of the blues. He went straight home, threw himself into bed, turned his face to the wall and refused to eat.

We get an introductory glimpse into Ahab's charac-

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

ter through this incident. When a man loses his appetite over such a trifle, it is a sign of weakness. He must be a petulant fellow who is so easily thrown into the sulks. Such a man needs something to occupy his mind besides the enlargement of palace lawns. He should have some projects ready to put into the place of those which must be abandoned. It is indeed an empty life which so quickly seeks the bed whimpering: "If I cannot have that particular vineyard, life is not worth the living."

One disappointment does not ruin a career that is really worth the name. One reversal of fortune does not mean failure. Yet how often do men feel that their entire future depends on a position they are seeking. "If I get that situation, my fortune is made," says some young man. The implication is that if he does not get it, there will be nothing left but an aching void. True happiness does not depend on positions or vineyards. Nothing can wreck a life but sin.

Queen Jezebel listens to her despondent husband's tale, and laughs him to scorn. "Are you a king, or are you just playing at it? Give me charge of this little matter. Meanwhile get up and eat; you shall have the vineyard." We could almost admire this royal spouse's spirit if we did not recollect the awful plot she at once devised to have poor Naboth falsely accused of treason and blasphemy, and stoned to death, in order that his vineyard might be confiscated to the crown. It was all done with despatch, and the queen lost no time in

THE DEVIL'S LAWNSHOP.

bringing her lord the message: "Arise and take possession of the vineyard which you couldn't buy with good money; it is yours now; Naboth is dead." That is all. There are no details given or asked for. The king does not appear concerned about the manner of his neighbor's sudden death, or the price the heirs received. He just went and took possession. Why shouldn't he? He didn't kill anybody; he wasn't supposed to know of the judicial murder; he merely knew that the vineyard was his.

How easily do some men take advantage of the sins which others commit for them. Here is a leading church official, for example, whose property has been rented year after year to dissolute people. Their nefarious business enables him to get a very high rental. Of course he does not attend to the affairs of his houses directly; he has a real estate firm do it for him. His plea is that his agents are responsible for such matters. He never inquires about the reputation of his tenants; he never asks his agents to explain how they get him so high a revenue in a neighborhood where property is a drug on the market. He just deposits the cheques, and asks no questions.

But such a man is guilty as perdition itself. This particular sinner-by-proxy, Ahab, shows that he is conscious of crime at the very first opportunity. He is in the garden, surveying his new possessions. Suddenly the prophet Elijah stands before him. He has no time to recover his self-composure and give a diplomatic

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

greeting. "Mine enemy," he blurts out, "hast thou found me?" Therein he betrays himself. He shows his guilt. For otherwise why does he call Elijah his enemy? The prophet had done the king a great favor at their last meeting. Why should he not be greeted as a friend? It is an impromptu confession such as might be expected from one of such changing moods. He might as well have cried: "O Elijah, thou knowest that I am guilty of perjury, murder and robbery." A man was on trial down in New York for stealing brass from a railroad yard. His counsel was making a vigorous defence, and the prospects for acquittal looked bright until just before the State closed its case, when the prisoner committed a fatal blunder. A fellow employee was being examined by the prosecution when the accused called to his lawyer in a stage whisper: "How can that fellow testify to anything? He wasn't there when I took the brass."

"Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" The prophet's answer is: "Yea, I have found thee because thou hast sold thyself to work evil." There is something terribly progressive indicated in that. Elijah had never spoken in this stern strain before. He had worked hard to get Ahab to repent. But now he seems to have abandoned all hope. He speaks as if the die were cast. "Thou hast sold thyself to work evil."

Sold out and found out! What a striking metaphor is this! It portrays the last step in a persistent sinner's career. Study the various steps in the awful

THE DEVIL'S PAWNSHOP.

evolution, and you will see that the text proclaims the climax of a life of wilful iniquity.

First, there were the early sins of the young monarch's life. Ahab started where his father had left off. He had all the sire's faults as a capital stock. Then he allowed himself to be dragged lower by a bad marriage. When his bride came into the kingdom, she brought her household gods with her. It was one of those mixed marriages against which so many sages advise. But the alliance was the veriest calamity to the nation because of the downright wickedness of the queen. The king became a willing tool in her hand. He consented to the tearing down of the altars of Jehovah, to the murder of the prophets of the God of Israel, to the establishment of Baal-worship, and to the induction of eight hundred heathen priests. The first estrangement between Charles I. and his parliament occurred just after his bride, Princess Henrietta Maria of France, came to the palace. The astute Puritans thought they sniffed the incense of the mass in the chapel of Whitehall. Their sovereign was yielding to his queen's alien religion. This king of Israel did not hide his apostasy. Far from rebuking the crimes against the religion of his fathers, he built an altar to Baal and turned his people towards idolatry with all its vileness.

Yet he was given repeated opportunity to shake off the grip of Satan. Heaven is fair, even to the headlong sinner. The biographies of great malefactors show how

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

good struggles with evil in the most corrupt life. Chances to repent are as milestones in the wicked man's way. The first warning came when Elijah leaped into his path to predict famine. It was a call to turn back to God. Adversity may be our summons to a new life.

A second opportunity comes to him on Mount Carmel. It is an appeal to his reason. The priests of Baal are proven helpless. All their prayers, their cries, their self-tortures, fail to bring an answer from their god. But the prophet of the Lord makes his simple, earnest request to heaven, and the sacrifice is consumed. The people cry with one voice: "The Lord, He is the God! The Lord, He is the God!" They need not twice be told to slay the heathen prophets, for they are fully persuaded now. Ahab, also, is convinced. It must have been with his consent that the queen's priests were slain. At any rate he is complacent enough about it all to enjoy the dinner which Elijah suggested.

And it is raining! The ambassador of God accepts the declarations of the people as a national act of contrition and the rain is sent as a token of Heaven's reconciliation. Yes, there is sound of abundance of rain. The king's coachman whips up the horses. The prophet himself acts as forerunner to the royal carriage. Raindrops patter on the mountain-side. The water sweeps down the highway in torrents, as if pursuing the cortège as it speeds toward Jezreel. The

THE DEVIL'S PAWNSHOP.

capital is reached, and the happy monarch enters his palace fully persuaded that the God of his ancestors has spoken!

But!—The wicked woman meets the weak husband. The king tells his strange story. The wonderful happenings of the day are related. "O wife, this glorious rain is the result of Prophet Elijah's wonderful demonstration. He convinced us all. The Baal priests could not pray down a single spark; Elijah's God answered by a flame of fire. Then the people shouted their confession, and killed all the lying prophets. Immediately, signs of rain appeared, as if to show God's approval on their work, and we could hardly get home on account of the glorious downpour."

"But my prophets!" cries the queen; "my dear priests!" "Never mind the priests, wife; think of the rain, and what it will do for the kingdom." But Jezebel rages. "Go and tell that Elijah," she shouts to a messenger, "that I want to be dead and cursed if I do not have him killed before this time to-morrow!" And the man of God, after bringing untold blessing to a whole kingdom, must flee for his life.

Now is the king's golden moment! Here is his opportunity to rise to the occasion. He has logic on his side. He has seen the fire of God. This is the time to say, "Wife, we will proceed no further in this business. The Lord is God, and we will serve Him. Elijah deserves our thanks, and he shall dine with me to-night." But he sells out! Now nothing is too

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

base for him to do. Having shut his eyes against warning, logic and mercy, he is led about, blind! He belongs to the devil and follows his bidding!

That is the evolution of a confirmed sinner! Satan is daily allowed a little greater scope, until he is in absolute control. In my boyhood, there was in our community a man who was known as a financial leech. He got on by shaving notes, loaning money on chattel-mortgages, and taking advantage of people's misfortunes. I remember hearing it rumored that a certain business man was borrowing money from this Shylock. My father shook his head, and our wise old neighbor said, "Poor Smith will lose every cent he has." Young as I was, I could not help noticing the gradual process by which the prophecy was fulfilled. The creditor was about the involved merchant's store more and more. Occasionally I saw him in the office. Once he was examining the ledger. Soon he had a desk in the back of the store. One morning he was in charge! The next week his name was over the entrance, and the deposed proprietor was working for him! Satan will surely be the proprietor by and by in any firm in which he gets the smallest voice.

Sold out! The victim never realizes it until he is really dispossessed. He never intends to do it. He only wants it to be in the form of a loan; he never means to sell. He wants to pawn a thing or two, and will have the funds to meet the debt next week. See him going to the devil's pawnbroker's shop. He turns

THE DEVIL'S PAWNSHOP.

around to see whether anybody is looking. When the coast is clear he steps in. There are lonely little stalls in the pawnshop and the youth enters all alone. "Here is a jewel I want to get a loan on," he stammers. "You'll keep it safe, won't you?" and he draws from his bosom the jewel of Virtue which he got from his mother. The devil smiles a shrewd smile, tells him it is not worth so much after all, assures him it is perfectly safe in his hands, and gives him, in payment, debauch and disease.

He goes to the devil's shop again, more leisurely this time, and not half so careful to avoid being seen. "Could I get a loan on this watch? It belonged to my father, so it is a sort of heirloom." And as the eager hands open it to show the movement, the engraving within is exposed: "Presented for long service and unremitting fidelity." It is Honesty that the young fellow is pawning, the honesty his father handed him, and he takes the proceeds, a few dollars, with which to enjoy the fleeting luxuries of appetite. Alas! he will never get back the watch.

Virtue and Honesty are gone, and still he needs money. So he carries a parcel to the pawnbroker's shop. "Wouldn't have it known for the world that I brought you this," he whispers with a grin, as he unwraps the first piece. "It's the family plate, something that has come down to me through four generations." And the devil says that is one beauty about his business; it's so confidential. "Nobody is ever the wiser for what goes

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

on here." And he examines the quaint old spoons, the knives and forks, the tea set, the candelabra. Each piece is engraved "Reputation," with the family name underneath. "Of course, I only want a loan on it, mind. My folks wouldn't hear of my disposing of it." "Just a loan," smiles Satan. "Many do it; you'd be surprised to know the names of the folks that leave their plate with me every summer while they're away to the seashore. They get it back in the autumn. They don't use it during the hot months, you know." So the young man goes away with the precious bundle left behind, and a bank bill and a pawn ticket in his pocket. Virtue, Honesty and Reputation gone! Proceeds gone! Days of grace gone, too, and in the devil's show-window next week, the family plate is exposed for sale. The passers-by look, and smile pitilessly. A soul is sold out, and found out.

This sad bit of biography is given us for our good. It is a beacon of warning. Profit by it even now, my dear young man, though you may have been negotiating with evil. Call upon the resources of Heaven to-day to help you shake off the tightening grip of Satan.

he
ch
ne
it,
,"
be
ve
ay
ey
he
eft
et.
e!
ow
he
ut,

od.
ny
at-
en
of

XIV.
HOW TO KEEP A DIARY.

"On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. And the king said, What honor and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants, There is nothing done for him."—Esther 6: 1, 2, 3.

XIV.

HOW TO KEEP A DIARY.

THIS king, Ahasuerus, kept a diary. There is great fun in keeping a diary, for you buy it with great expectations, you begin it with great enthusiasm, and you neglect it with great promptness. It is the exceptional man who really keeps a diary; but, mind you, he keeps it in an exceptional way. He doesn't say: "Got up at 7; washed, breakfasted and went to work; dined at 6; concert at 8; bed at 11.30." There is no use telling your diary all that. But what King Ahasuerus told his diary is worth while, for he recorded the good deeds of others towards him. Isn't that grand? Wasn't that worth while? I can almost see the entry: "This day I owe a Jewish attendant, Mordecai, my life. He uncovered the plot of two chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, to assassinate me. Conspirators hanged." Such a diary as that is worth keeping. To record kindnesses received is to develop a right royal culture. Read good Queen Victoria's journal, and you will remark that in nearly every day's entry she speaks kindly of someone.

I.

Memory is a great diary in which we automatically record things. The memory can be trained, too, to

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

write down one class of deeds or another. You can make it an obedient stenographer. O Memory, take up a pen and record that John Smith hurt my feelings to-day. Use ink that won't fade. Write what he said in big letters. Underscore that harsh word. Now mark the page at the corner and write in red ink, "To be remembered and never forgotten." Do that a few times, and Memory will write without being told. Hiss out the words, "I never forget," and you won't forget, and your diary will soon be a record of harsh words, of tempers, of quarrels, of hates, of spites. You can recall, at will, the ghosts of yesterday's ill deeds, and they will come out of the shadows to tell you how to strike back blow for blow. O Memory, take up a pen and write. Say that John Smith brought over some sweetmeats for the children; that Mrs. Jones sent up a sample of her newly-made mince pies; that the nicely-dressed lady in the street car arose to offer the tired-looking woman with the baby a seat. Record the good thought we noticed going by a moment ago. Use good ink or indelible pencil. Do that a few times and Memory will record the pleasing, and you will have a diary that you can carry into the unfrequented streets of old age, where you will have plenty of time to read, and the nice things that Memory has written away back through the years will make you wear a quiet smile, so that passers-by will say, "What a fine young face that old man has."

In such a diary you will write less and less about

HOW TO KEEP A DIARY.

yourself. Not a word about the rheumatics. And you'll almost forget to die, so interested will you be in other people. Did Horatio Nelson think of his mortal wound when he was dying? "Anchor, Hardy, anchor! Do you anchor, Hardy?" I knew such a hero as that in the person of an old soldier who had been dying so long that his poor old body was all but a skeleton by the time the undertaker came to wrap it in his country's flag. But that old fighting man never thought of himself. The morning of the day he died, he wanted to see the preacher, for he said he knew he was going to die, and he wanted to encourage the minister a bit before he went away. All morning his heart had been threatening to stop, and now it raced along at double speed as if intent on making up for the beats it had skipped. "Come in! come in!" he shouted; "How are you, and how's the church, and are there any converts?" Then he talked army, told how he saw Sheridan riding over the field at Cedar Creek, and described the progress of the battle until he wanted to be lifted up so that he could use the bed for landscape and the wrinkles in the quilts for hills and valleys. He waxed eloquent, saw visions of the blue and the gray, and sank back upon the pillows, exhausted, to make an allusion to the conquering Christ sweeping the valley of earth, just like Phil Sheridan swept the Shenandoah. Then he spoke of his wife's sacrificing loyalty and the church's kindness. Never said a word about his pain until I asked him, and then,

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

like Charles the Second, he almost apologized for being "such an unconscionable time a-dying." Within a few minutes he had a triumphant death, for there seemed to float around that bed the sweet memories of kind friends and good deeds. For years the old man had been storing by these things, and now they came out of the shadows to console his departing spirit during the struggles of dissolution.

II.

But this king forgot. He was so busy with the affairs of state that he never did look back over his diary. He never thought of the faithful old Jew at the gate. Aye, some people forget the good deeds of others. They are too busy with the demands of business and society to remember the favors they accepted in days of trial. They take all that is offered to them, but they don't get around to think of the man that helped them, perhaps to the very position they now hold. They never say: "There's Jim, dear good fellow; sat up with me when I had the fever; and do you remember, wife, how Mrs. Jim went with you to the hospital on the day our Lucy was operated upon? Let's go over to Jim's to-night; they're in hard luck just now, for he's been laid off. Let's take over some o' that honey for Mrs. Jim's cold, and we'll have a good visit." Yes, some folks do forget. Sometimes a husband forgets to read, in his diary, of his wife's faithfulness. He forgets how she struggled and saved, nursed the children, cooked,

HOW TO KEEP A DIARY.

kept the house, washed, ironed and swept—all because she loved him and home and the children. And he yawns away from the supper table, "Oh, deary me, I wish some one would come and spend the evening with me." You do, eh? You blue old fossil of ingratitude! Suppose you play courting this evening. Suppose you tell your wife how much you appreciate her. Suppose you take her for a walk down Yonge Street, and while you're out, suppose you put your arm through hers and snuggle up with those sweet ways which you used to have.

Some people think that to show appreciation is a sign of weakness. They imagine it is diplomatic to repress gratitude. To be stoical and taciturn they think is the badge of bravery. My Scotch collie knows better than that. He licks the hand that binds up his bruised paw. I was leaving a home where a poor young mother was caring for two sick babies, with scarcely enough food and with scant clothing and bedding and fuel. And the husband, out of work, walked down the street a block or two with me. "Ah, I pity my poor little wife, and I often want to tell her so," said he, "but I must keep up a stern front, or else she'll give way altogether. She cries a good deal as it is." "Then go back to her at once, and put your arms about her, and tell her she's a brave woman, and for her sake you're going to try hard to succeed. Do it quickly and she'll take heart afresh."

Then others expect that some day they will be in

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

changed conditions where showing gentleness and reciprocal kindnesses will be easier than now. "If my folks really had those tender instincts that novels tell about," explained a dreamy young fellow, "I'd enjoy my home life and stay indoors more with the family." As he imagines his folks are so much different from the story-book people, he goes down to the resorts where the frequenters are certainly not of the gentle book-of-fiction sort. He expects some glorious day to come when he will be, by force of surroundings, a gracious, kind-tongued, appreciative gentleman. No; here and now is the place and the time to show love, appreciate favors and express gratitude.

III.

This king recollected. He was pretty long in reading his diary, but one night when he could not sleep, and music and dancing didn't interest him, he had them read his diary to him, and they read about Mordecai and the conspirators.

"Stop! Has anything been done for this man? No? Then send for Haman, and I'll ask him what would be the decent thing to do." And the result is that Mordecai, in the king's robes and on the king's horse, is proclaimed through the streets as the man "whom the king delighteth to honor."

Pretty long overdue, to be sure, and yet better late than never. "Give me my flowers before I die," is a sentiment that makes us all nod our heads and say,

HOW TO KEEP A DIARY.

"That's so," but if you should happen to forget to send them while your friend is in health, send them to his sick-room; if too late for that, send them to the funeral; if too late for that service, send them out to be placed on the grave; but, at all hazards, send the flowers. Yea, if you have been so criminally neglectful of the reciprocity of kind deeds as to overlook your duty in the matter until a decade or two or three have passed since your friend was laid away in Mount Pleasant, carry out the wreath now, and place it on his tomb. If it will not do him any good, it will redeem your reputation in your own eyes, and you will walk away with a new manhood.

The germ of decency is sometimes pretty long in getting a start in people's hearts. But if it has the slightest chance it will multiply. I was called upon to officiate at the funeral of the wife of a dissolute fellow who, the neighbors claimed, had actually allowed the poor little Scotch-Canadian woman to die for the lack of food and medicine. He could not even pay for a grave, and the interment had to be made in the awful Potter's Field. And to cap the climax of shame, when the time for the service came, he was dead drunk! Two years later, I preached in the Buffalo penitentiary one Sunday morning and I saw that man among the convicts. I had time, after the service, for a word with him, and he said: "Pastor, I've reformed. I came in here three weeks ago, and on a thirty-day sentence. Last Sunday I heard a sermon on Christ

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

giving every man another chance, and I made up my mind I'd take my second chance now."

He was as good as his word. The microbe of manhood had begun to work. He went from jail to seek employment, and he had no trouble in getting it, for he was a skilled mechanic. He saved \$60 in an incredibly short time, and he took it to the undertaker and said, "Get her out of the Potter's Field and bury her in a lot in Forest Lawn Cemetery." At this second and final interment he was sober, and he followed the water-soaked coffin to the grave, a sincere mourner, and he went away with a resolute face, to get his little girl out of the orphanage in which the authorities had placed her, and make her a home.

Oh, the wind blows over the grave of many an unappreciated one, but God writes it all down in His great Book. He will read it. He will remember. He will never forget. And some day He will say to Gabriel: "Gabriel, go thou down to yon cemetery, and blow thy trumpet and wake her, for she has been sleeping long enough. Wipe away the last trace of tears, and bring her up to Me. Tell her that at last she'll get the home she has been expecting so long. Bring her up and let the angels put her on the finest charger of heaven, crown her with a crown of glory and cast over her shoulders a mantle of white. And, Gabriel, take thou the bridle-rein thyself and lead the charger through the golden streets, and let ten thousand angels proclaim it to the uttermost parts of heaven, and to the place on

HOW TO KEEP A DIARY.

earth where they saw her in suffering and shame, that thus shall it be done to the woman that Almighty God delighteth to honor." Amen and Amen. She has come into her own at last. The appreciation, long overdue, is delivered by angelic hands!

XV.

"A COLT WANTED."

"And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? And they said, The Lord hath need of him."—Luke 19: 33, 34.

XV.

"A COLT WANTED."

hereof
said,

EVEN this seemed fitting—this going into a yard and untying a colt, and the owners rushing up excitedly and challenging the intruders with, "Why loose ye the colt?" and the calm answer, "The Lord hath need of him," and the willing yielding tersely expressed by the Gospel writer's words, "And they let them go."

Christ, King of Glory, must ride into His capital city of Jerusalem, and He needs a steed. He has walked long enough. He must ride to-day. Is He so tired? No, not so tired, but He is King to-day. For three years He has been Jesus the servant. He is Christ the King to-day. He has been a great walker. His feet have carried Him on long errands of love. As the Son of Man, he walked; as the Great Sacrifice, He was led; as the Son of David, He rode into Jerusalem; as the Prince of Heaven, He rode to Glory, with a cloud for His chariot.

His steed was the foal of an ass, the emblem of peaceful authority. The ass was the steed of Solomon in ancient

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

Israel, and of Louis XIV. in modern France. The colt was yonder, awaiting His bidding. All that was necessary to do was to send over the messengers to bring him, then to mount him and to ride into Jerusalem in triumph.

The incident yields itself to our present purpose to speak of the needs of our Lord, of this regal appropriation of material things, and of the willing surrender of the steed by its owners.

Our Saviour had needs; not the personal requirements of food and clothing, but the needs of a king. Has a king needs? Yes, a king needs men, materials, money, ships, territory. On earth our King had needs, regal needs. He needed bread wherewith to feed the host. He needed homes in which to teach, money to use as object lessons, ships from which to still waves, boats from which to preach sermons. Aye, He needed a stable in which to be born, an upper room in which to break bread; a garden in which to weep; a cross on which to die; a tomb from which to rise; a cloud on which to ride!

Our Saviour has needs. To-day, yesterday, every day from Pentecost to now He has had needs. Witnesses He has always required. Kings and beggars, preachers and soldiers, judges and legislators, armies and navies, printing shops and railways, telegraphs and telephones—all these he has used as steeds on

NGS.

ance. The
l that was
essengers to
ride into

purpose to
gal appro-
ng surren-

l require-
f a king.
materials,
ad needs,
feed the
money to
to still
Aye, He
rooms in
weep; a
o rise; a

r, every
s. Wit-
beggars,
armies
egraphs
eds on

"A COLT WANTED."

which to ride into cities, across continents, over seas,
into minds and hearts.

He rides upon the modest talents of men. This poor
little colt might have been used for baser purposes,
carrying oppressing publicans or snivelling pharisees.
But it was loaned to the Lord! How small a gift He
can use! The little qualifications which we are apt to
overlook, He can employ for great and lasting good.

Take that talent of singing, for instance. It can be
made a commerical commodity, so many songs for so
much money. Or it can be made an evangel. Walk
down any Toronto street on a Sunday afternoon and
hear the folks in parlors sing the popular gospel hymns,
and you will know that there is an abundance of talent
outside of choir and soloist circles. Christ needs these
voices to sing in hospitals and prisons and sick-rooms.
According to the word of an undertaker, the comfort of
Christian song is badly needed at funerals in the
homes of the poor. The Lord hath need of voices. They
are steeds upon which He can ride into hearts. A vocal
teacher of some fame had me sit in an adjoining room
while a star pupil sang a selection. Even to my un-
trained ear, that baritone gave evidence of a marvelous
quality of voice. When we were alone the teacher said:
"I have given that man all I can ever give him. The
rest must come from his soul and not from his vocal
organs." That statement disturbed me. I have thought

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

much upon it. It was the truth. His voice was a perfect steed; all it needed now was a Divine rider. P. T. Barnum said that the most wonderful singing he had ever heard was when Jenny Lind sang "Come, Ye Disconsolate" for the patients in a New Orleans hospital. He said she seemed an angel, filled with goodness, and pouring forth her soul for the express purpose of giving balm to the desolate.

Or take the gift of speech. The conversational talent, too often used upon frivolous themes, can be used to God's glory. Christ is made to say, in the prophecy of Isaiah: "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word, in season, to him that is weary." We speak a deal of cant about church work. We seem to think that an usher's place or a ladies' aid office is necessary to Christian work. Would that we realized that the talent of the average man who can put a sentence together so as to express a thought can be used as a steed upon which Divine truth may be carried to minds. And such conversation need not necessarily be upon the narrower themes of doctrinal questions, but upon matters of daily experience, such as overcoming faults, coping with temptations or developing patience. Say no more that you have nothing which God can use. There is a steed in your back yard.

More, Christ has a sovereign right to what you have.

"A COLT WANTED."

The steed was His NEED; it was also His RIGHT. Does it at first seem rather arbitrary that He should send His messengers to untie the colt without first securing the owner's consent? Consider then that He drafted it into the King's service. The "divine right of kings" has been changed to the right of eminent domain. But it is a necessary feature of government. The crown or the commonwealth claims certain rights over private property for the good of the people. For public uses, we appropriate lands, subordinating individual claims to public requirements. During the famine following the San Francisco earthquake, the authorities did not hesitate to seize the stocks of grocers and butchers wherewith to feed the starving multitudes. They gave the merchants a fair price for the victuals, but used them for the sustenance of all.

Christ has a right to your talent for the good of the Kingdom. Phillips Brooks spoke a distinctly Christian word when he said that no man is truly great until he feels that he belongs to the race. If I stop you in front of my door and say: "Help me get out my furniture for the moving van, for I move to-day," you have a right to decline. But if I plead with you to lend a hand in getting out my furniture because my house is afire and all will be lost before the firemen arrive, you have no right to refuse! If I stop you in your automobile and ask you to carry me out to my house for no

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

particular reason except that I want an auto ride, you are justified in riding on without me. But one evening a few of us hailed a passing touring car owner to request that he carry to her home a woman who had just had her hip broken in a trolley accident. The man hummed and hawed and said his ladies would be disappointed. It needed the vigorous exhortation of an indignant bystander of six feet in height and three hundred pounds to convince that automobilist that the Lord had need of him. For, let me say that it was really and truly the Lord that had need of him that evening. His car belonged to the King that night. It would have been high treason to refuse the use of his gasoline donkey!

Christian, when you became a disciple, you covenanted to give the King your all. He comes now, through His ambassador, to say: "I want the use of your colt." As the agent of the King, I say to you now, "The Lord hath need of thee."

Sinner, He has a right to your colt, too, for is He not on an errand for your good? Suppose the owner had quibbled, could not the Saviour have said: "I go to lay down my life for you; can you not give even an hour's use of your steed?"

I rejoice at the incident's ending: "And they let them go." Without parley, they willingly yielded. The events of the day come rushing on and the ass and his

"A COLT WANTED."

owners are lost in the perspective of the picture. Undoubtedly the animal was returned. Very likely, as in the case of the Toronto gentleman whose horse was ridden by Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, that steed was pointed out for years as the bearer of the Lord! It was the one thing worth telling about the little colt. The only thing that will be worth telling of you and me will be that we carried the King's message!

It fills me with awe to think that the Master knows what I have. He knew the colt was there. "Ye will find a colt there." He knows what I possess. He knows! He never underestimates my worth. He never overestimates my talents. He knows, and I cannot cheat Him.

It awakens my self-respect to know that He can use me. I am a better man for that. And it disarms me to know that He expects me to willingly yield. Say with me, "Lord, I willingly yield Thee my steed."

XVI.

THE ONLY RACE WORTH RUNNING.

"Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."—Heb. 12: 1.

XVI.

THE ONLY RACE WORTH RUNNING.

THERE is only one race worth running, and that is the race of a faithful life. I was almost inclined to say a successful life, but that might imply a useless discussion of the word "success." And we need not disparage the qualities that bring us the blessings of material things in order to show the pre-eminence of moral excellencies. In fact, they never should be placed in opposition. There is no reason why the successful man of business should not also have the higher success of spirituality. The only requirement is that he regard the latter to be the higher. But a faithful life is one that all may live, the dullest as well as the brightest. The great race is that of a persevering and finally triumphant career, with all heaven for an audience, with human life as the track, with death as the wire, with the Master as the judge, and with immortality as the prize. Ah, that is a race that might well be called the Sweepstakes of the King of Kings.

To this supreme contest, all other races must be mere incidents. Some, alas, make the sad mistake of assaying to run on a course that holds out nothing but a perishable garland, and spending so much energy in the innumerable sprints of the petty struggles of earth

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

that they have no spirit left for the Eternity Handicap. They work so hard for self that they are too tired to work for humanity. They follow Mammon so closely that they are too exhausted to follow God.

A man cannot spread his intensity over too much ground. He cannot be a specialist in too many lines. One thing is enough. They say the law is a jealous mistress ; so is the pulpit, so is any business. So is the struggle for eternal life. Moreover, many a man deceives himself by imagining that he is serving God, when he is really only working for himself. He fancies he is earning immortality when he is merely paying for a monument to hold his name and date of birth and death. He is on a toy race-track under the delusion that he is on the mile course.

Some people spend their lives looking at the trivial, when they might continually behold the majestic. Over at Niagara Falls, I saw a young fellow and his bride looking at the little dripping, drizzling streams that fall from the mill-race of the paper mills on the American side. They seemed to me to be wasting time. There they stood, holding hands and watching a thin little column of drops while they might have been gazing on the tremendous cataract. So some spend their whole life-span in puny pursuits, and absolutely miss the supreme purpose of their careers. Looking continually at the glitter of gold and silver, they are incapacitated for the contemplation of a sunset. Listening intently to the constant jingle of dollars and cents,

THE ONLY RACE WORTH RUNNING.

they have no ear for the earthly harmonies that give promise of the eternal symphonies of heaven.

Too often the race for money so engrosses the attention of men that they forget to be honest. They do things that disqualify them in the race for ordinary decency. They foul their competitors, they put thorns and briars on their opponents' track, they shut themselves out from all chance of even entering the mighty contest for nobility.

Then, too, some folks spend too much time on the little, childish race-track of society, where a horseshoe of fading flowers is the only prize. Is it wrong then to be socially active? No, of course not, if you mean the cultivation of sincere friendships. But when formalities preclude profitable conversation, when extravagances make real hospitality impossible, when competitive wastefulness crowds out compeers who have more brains than dollars, when hypocritical fawning displaces frankness then one of the brightest spheres of service degenerates into a wanton vulgarity.

Still others are in the race for position and power. Is that wrong? Is it disqualifying to run for Parliament? On the contrary, it is quite right, especially if you mean to be something more than a party automaton. One of the most pitiable exhibits of present-day politics is a human voting-machine, elected by the people to be a legislator. Vice-President Sherman, in a recent speech of his, asked "What is a Republican?" His hearers must have leaned forward to hear a definition

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

that would make them proud of their party allegiance. Now what do you suppose the vice-president of ninety million freemen gave as his idea of a Republican? This: "A Republican is a man who votes for the Republican party on election day, and for Republican measures in Congress." That was all. And the saddest thing about it was that Mr. Sherman's audience applauded! What a contrast between this slavish view of political duty and the campaign utterance of Abraham Lincoln: "I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to what light I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right; stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong."

No, it is perfectly proper to aspire to places of influence and power. But what is wrong is desiring to win an election more than to be honest. What is wrong is in wanting to secure a majority so badly that you say: "Good-bye honesty, good-bye principle, good-bye fairness; I'll get back on your track again week after election." **YOU NEVER WILL!**

The race course, the text plainly states, is set before us. It is not one of our own choosing. Neither does it change with the generations or the styles. The principles of fidelity and honor are eternal. Human laws may be altered, but Divine laws never. Parliaments may amend the statutes of nations, but Almighty God has never revised the Ten Commandments. The race for immortality is run upon the same track our fathers

THE ONLY RACE WORTH RUNNING.

trod. It thrills us to know that our feet touch soil traversed by ancient saints who furrowed deep the path of integrity, devotion and endurance. Having finished the course, they have gone to the Grand Stand to see us, too, come home.

"A cloud of witnesses around,
Hold thee in full survey;
Forget the steps already trod,
And onward urge thy way."

It is salutary to think that they are watching us. There they are, the struggling, the persecuted, the persistent souls of all ages, "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth." These are the great cloud of witnesses which compass us about.

This race is for the prize, immortality. It is significant that nowhere in the Bible is the existence of the wicked after death called life. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Only those who run life's course well are to live forever.

The race is for a prize, but still it is not competitive.

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

None will be shut out because of our victory. The manager of a great delivery company, pointing out a horse hitched to a delivery wagon, said: "He used to be a race horse, and won several prizes, but now he does better than that ; he earns a prize of two dollars every day, and no other horses are beaten on account of his winning, either." Aye, that is the best feature of the real race of human endeavor. Nobody loses by our triumph. It is a question of endurance. "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." Let us not expect to gain eternal life by a mere fifty-yard dash. Neither will we be accounted winners by running a part of the course. To fall before the wire is reached is to lose! Past reputation is much, but not all. We must endure to the end.

Notice, also, that the prize is not given till the end of the race. That is so self-evident and reasonable, that it seems almost trite to mention it. And yet in the moral race, the fact is almost overlooked. True, there are numerous and valuable rewards along the way, but the great prize is awarded only when the victory is won. They carried a man's body into the French temple of fame the other day, that his ashes might rest with those of the great Carnot and the immortal Hugo. It was the body of Emile Zola. He died six years before, but the fickle people of France wouldn't allow him to be buried in their Westminster Abbey then. They did not think him worthy of that honor. He had defended poor Dreyfus; he had gone to prison for libel; he had

THE ONLY RACE WORTH RUNNING.

He faced a whole government, and denounced a whole army. But at last they brought him, "like an honored guest, with banner and with music, with soldier and with priest," to give him his due, and to concede him earthly immortality. Oh, the prize will come at last.

We are exhorted to throw away every handicap. "Wherefore let us lay aside every weight." The most unique race I ever saw was one in which two passenger trains were the contestants. The race-track lay between Niagara Falls and Tonawanda, N.Y. One train was on the Lehigh Valley tracks; the other on the New York Central. Both were belated, so schedules were ignored and throttles opened wide.

They had a fair start, and for a mile or so the two great steeds ran neck-and-neck, or fender-to-fender, you might say. The firemen were throwing on more coal, and the engineers leaned forward in their seats like riders in the saddle. The passengers greatly enjoyed the sensation; it seemed as if the train had left the earth, so smoothly did we glide over the steel. Then, to look across and see that the people on the New York Central train were becoming as excited as they would be over a baseball game made us all rank Lehigh partisans at once. Handkerchiefs were waved and fists were shaken.

But, by and by, I noticed that the Central train was gaining ever so slightly upon us. I needed to hold my head in a certain fixed position and use the side of the window as a gauge to notice it at all. Just then the

YOUR MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

conductor said, "They'll win, I'm afraid, for they have the lighter load." "How so?" I asked, for I had noticed that each train carried five cars. "Well, one of our cars is a baggage car, chock full of Canadian trunks and grips," he replied, "and that fact will beat us in the next three miles."

So it did. With the same locomotive power our rivals drew away from us. Very tenaciously did we hold on, and if the shouting of the men and the screaming of the ladies could have accomplished it we should have won. But though we kept within sight of their last car, they swept into the Tonawanda yards triumphant.

Too much baggage lost us the race. If the Canadians had only left their trunks behind!

Too much baggage loses more important races. Running the race for immortality, let us take care that we do not carry useless and encumbering luggage. Ambitions that can be turned into spurs for the winning of the great prize will be helps, but the object which diverts our attention from the main purpose of our careers will be a handicap. Wholesome knowledge, a well-stocked and well-trained mind and a symmetrical culture will help us in the race. But let us beware of an increasing myriad of purposes which will really be burdens in the journey to Glory.

We can afford to lay aside every weight of questionable pleasures, of useless luxuries, to enter the race that prophets, saints and martyrs ran and so received the crown.

have
noticed
cars
and
the

rivals
d on,
of the
won.
they

dians

aces.
that
gage.
ning
which
our
ge, a
rical
re of
y be

able
that
the